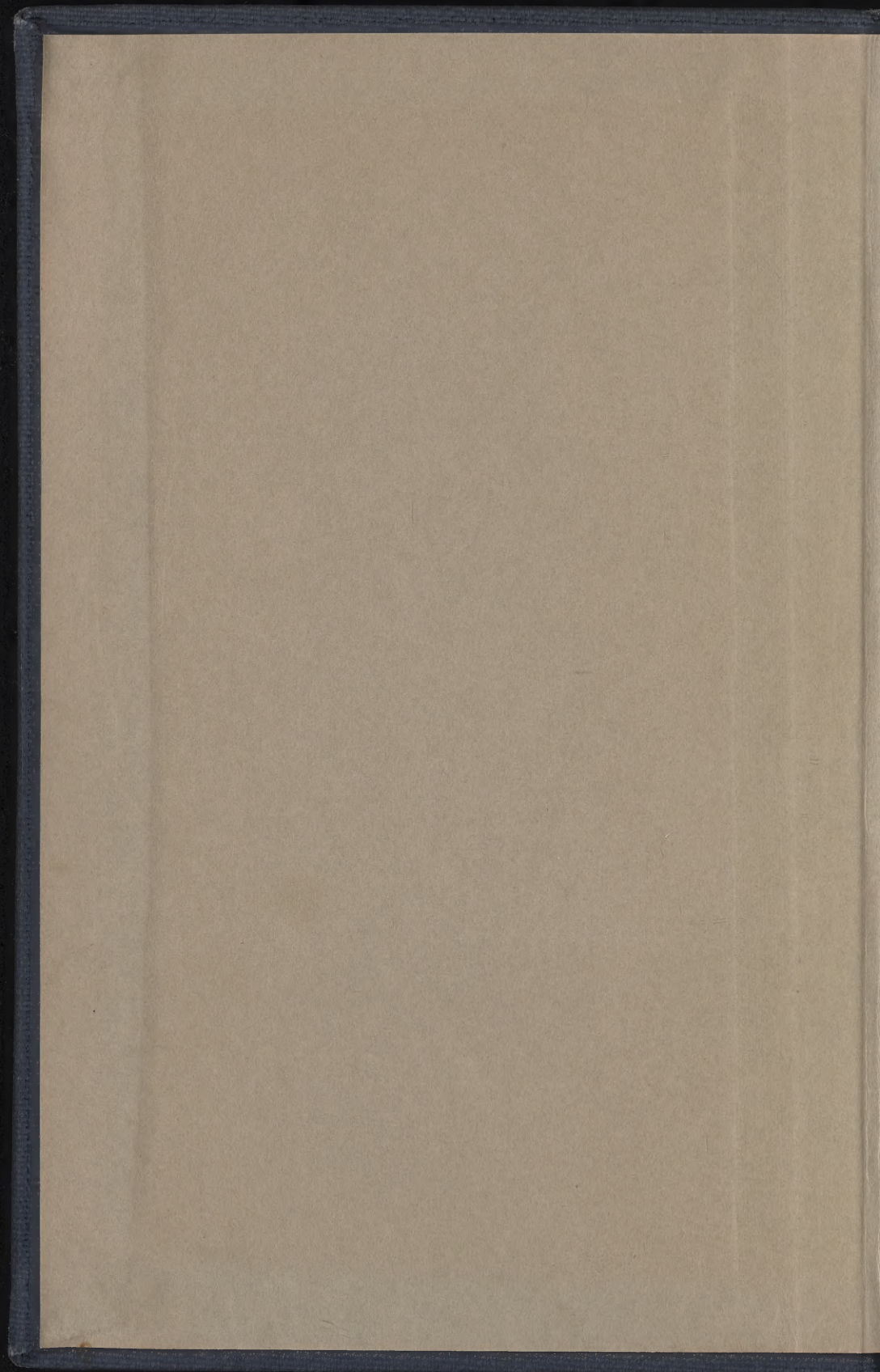
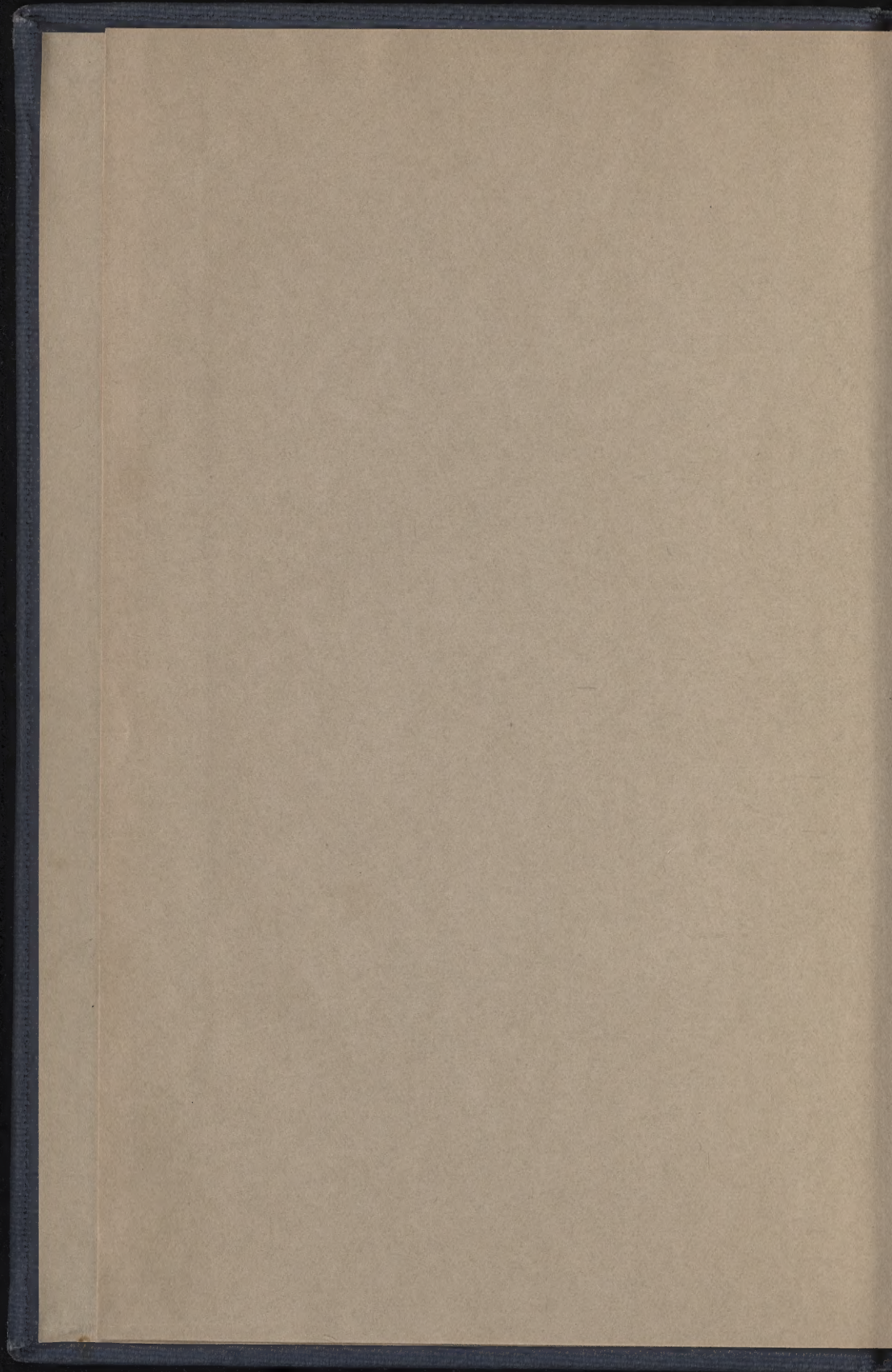
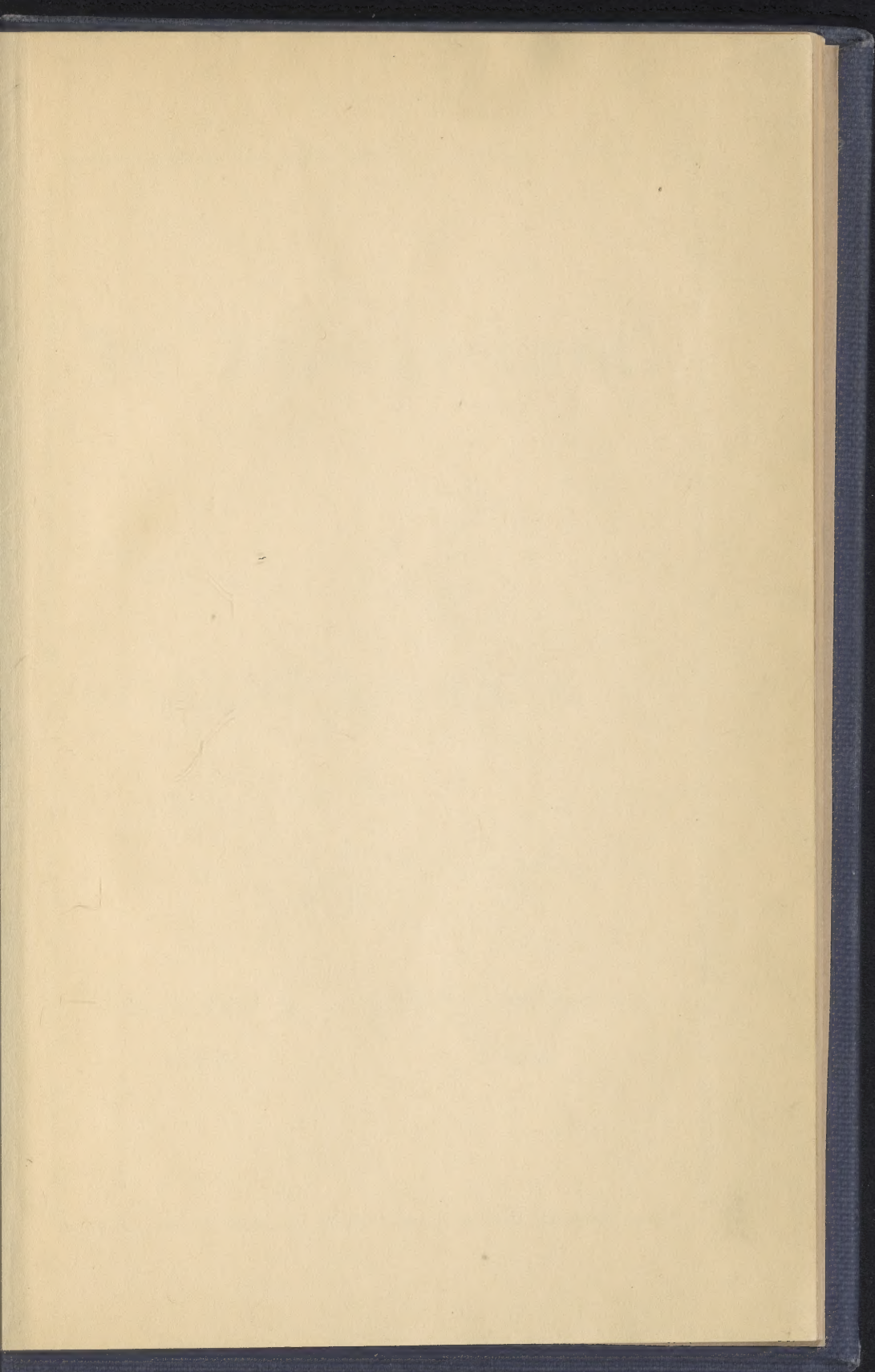


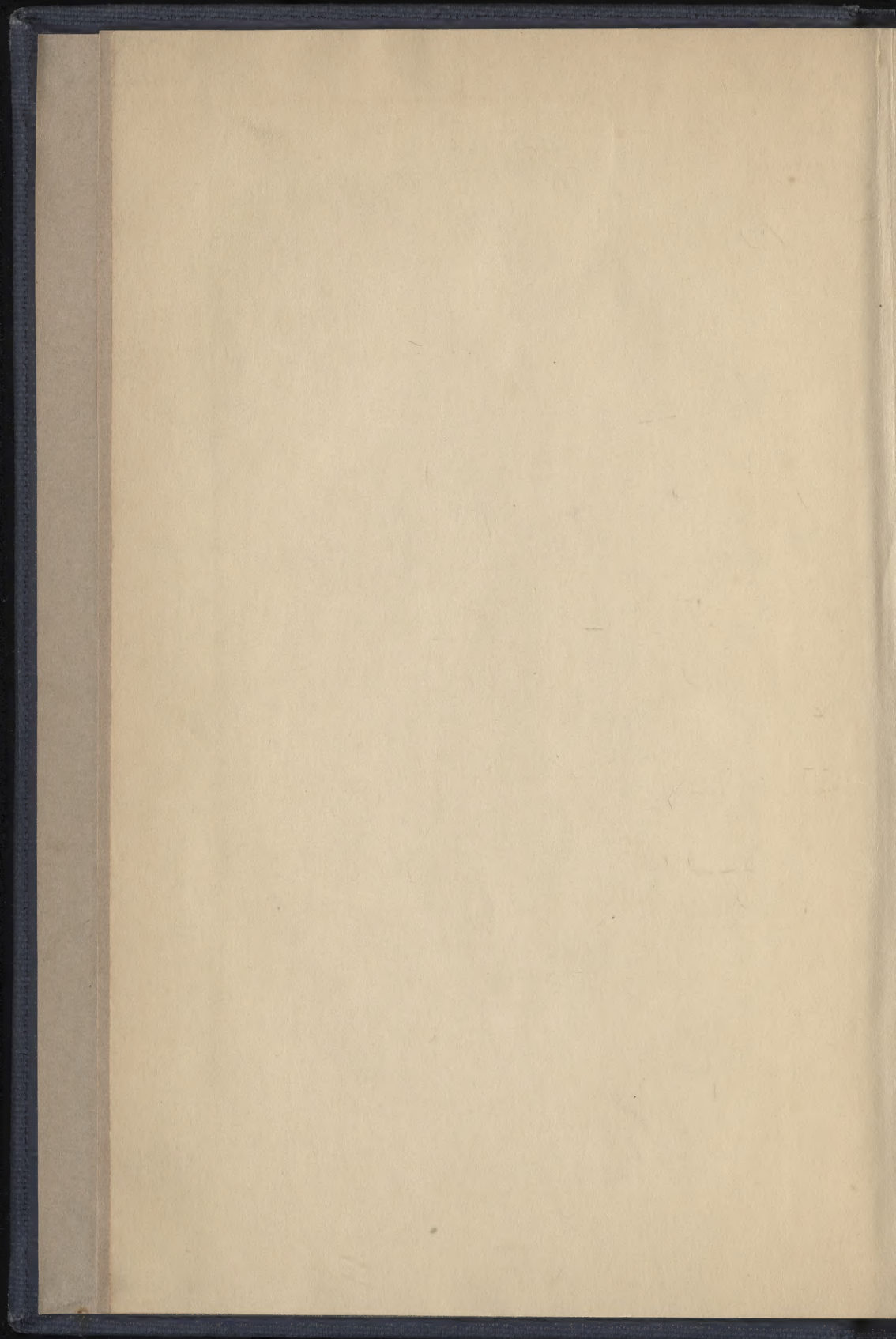
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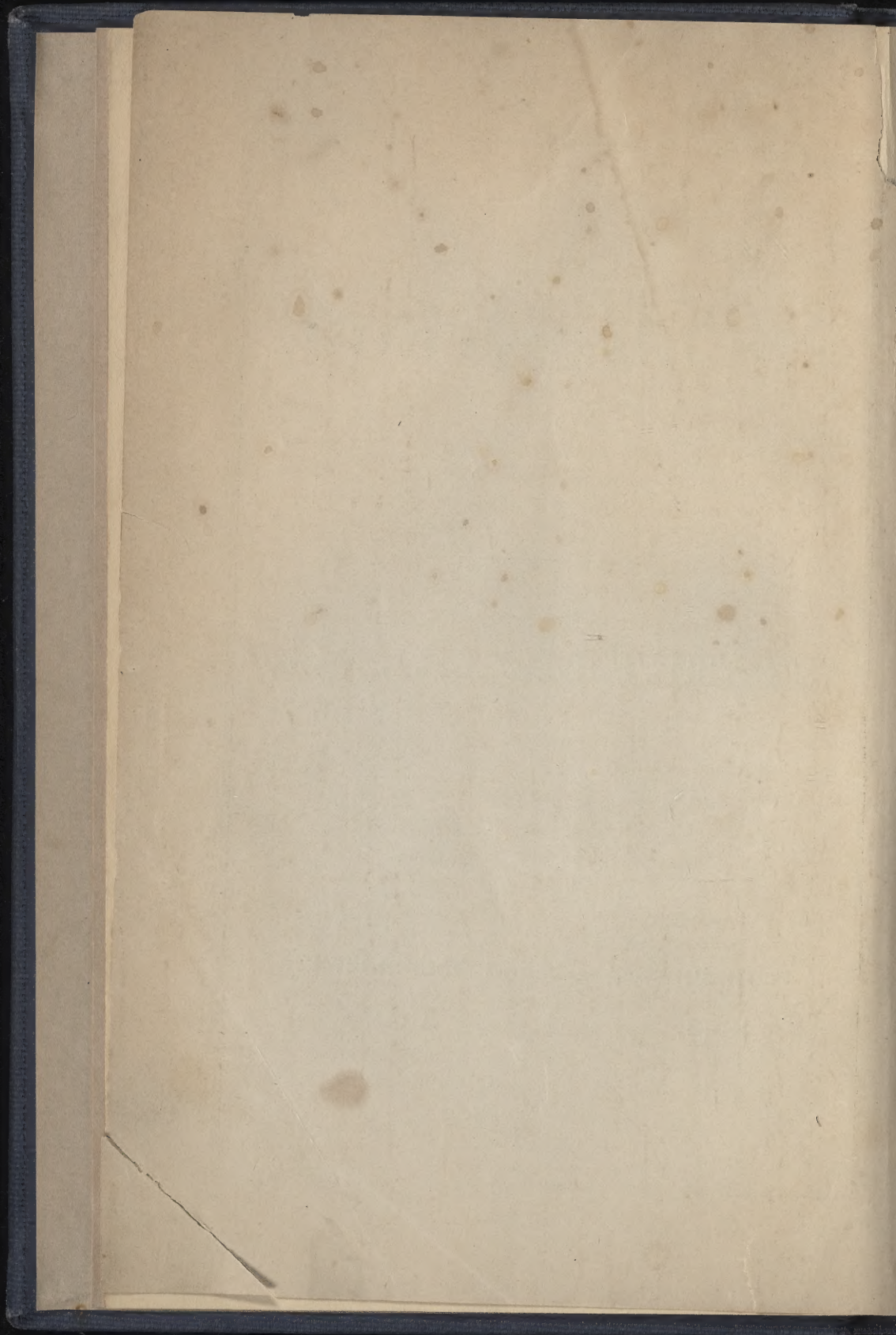
In Memoriam.

ROBERT MORRIS, Sr.

BOSTON COLLEGE LIBRARY
CHESTNUT HILL, MASS.

Born June 8,
1823.

Died December 12,
1882.



CT 6950

M87

In Memoriam.

[From the "Boston Leader," Lieut. HOWARD L. SMITH, Editor.]

In the death of Robert Morris, Sr., of Boston, Mass., the race of which he was a member lost a fearless advocate, a faithful and noble friend. His life was one that portrayed in its many vicissitudes a firmness of purpose, a consciousness of duty, a sacrificing nobility and a judicious mode of action, that, guided by an impulsive but generous nature, created a perpetual glow of warmth to his surroundings. He never faltered in what he considered to be his duty, no matter how perilous the task. He never turned from the pleadings of distress. In his prosperity he always remembered the adversities of the less fortunate, and in his generosity he was always unostentatious.

The battle of life against prejudice and caste was his forte, and, by his indefatigable and untiring energy for the advancement of his race, his fellow-men recognized in him a trustworthy leader. He was always *in front*. His motto was "Liberty and Equality." On the rostrum, he was an able and logical speaker, winning friends by his impartiality, earnestness and candor; at the bar, he was recognized as an able, keen, conscientious jurist; in the church, he was devout, and in his military surroundings, he was proficient.

Robert Morris, Sr., was a power. Instinctively he had the innate nature of a Hannibal to lead, the ability of a

L'Ouverture to conceive. To his race he would always say, "We need a black general."

Socially, Robert Morris, Sr., was a household gem. Everywhere he went, sunlight shone. When he left, a shadow took its place.

Politically, he was neither bound to Republicanism nor to Democracy. He aided the party that demonstrated by deeds, in place of words, true friendship to his race. With Robert Morris, Sr., race interests were paramount to party aggrandizement.

But "man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble." This axiom is demonstrated in the case of Robert Morris, Sr. Born in a period when prejudice against his race was rampant, he lived to see the abolition of slavery and its results.

But he has gone! Around the once active form of Robert Morris, Sr., stand friends whose hearts are bowed with grief. No more will be heard his ringing voice and merry laughter. No more will his followers hear his eloquence. He is gone!

The dark clouds of distress illumine the horizon; but behind them, surrounded with silver sheen, its halo lighting up his noble brow, stands Robert Morris, Sr. Here multitudes gather around his bier; yonder stands the hero surrounded by angels. We can but say, —

"Good-by!" And must we say the word
That hides the future?
Is there no ray, no hope, no light,
To make that future bright?
Alas! alas! it is "good-by!"
Cannot the word of parting be "good-night" —
For in it there is hope, there's light.
But no! it's said, the word must be "good-by!"

"Good-night" would make our aching hearts less dreary,
'Twould make the dismal void more cheery;
But no! "good-night" is not the word.
While fain we'd use it,
Fate tells us, "good-by! good-by!"
No clouds of gloom doth it dispel,
But round thy tomb the truth doth tell
That we must part: "good-by! good-by!"

As on thy form we stand and gaze,
And round us gather thick the haze —
We hear one word, there's one reply,
It's not "good-night," it is "good-by!"
We turn in sorrow from thy face,
So cold, so cold in comely grace,
And from thy lips we simply hear
Those words that fill our hearts with fear,
"Good-by! good-by!"

THE FUNERAL OBSEQUIES

IN THE CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, BOSTON, MASS.

SELDOM has there been seen, within the stately nave and aisles of this splendid Catholic temple, where so many solemn functions are performed and so many great congregations gathered, a more numerous or more deeply impressed throng of worshippers and mourners than on the morning of December 15, 1882.

The occasion was the solemn Mass of Requiem and obsequies of the late Robert Morris, Sr., the most prominent colored lawyer in Boston, who had been also, for many years, a prominent member of the congregation of this church. The magnificent sanctuary and altars, the graceful arches and columns, the family pew, were all appropriately draped. In front of the main altar, at the head of the grand aisle, was erected a handsome catafalque of black velvet and silver, on which the casket was laid. The imposing funeral procession entered the building, the remains of the departed being in advance, and was followed by the bereaved widow, who walked alone. The pall-bearers were Gen. W. W. Blackmar, Hon. George T. Downing, Hon. E. G. Walker, Hon. George L. Ruffin, Judge Parmenter, Hon. P. A. Collins, Wm. T. Connolly, clerk of the Municipal Court, Lewis Hayden.

Rev. Father Alphonse Charlier, S.J., was celebrant of the Mass, Rev. M. J. Byrnes, S.J., deacon; Mr. F. Barnum, S.J., sub-deacon, and Mr. E. Quirk, master of ceremonies. There were present in the sanctuary, Rev. J. O'Connor, S.J.,

president of Boston College, Rev. Father Strain, of Lynn, and several other Catholic clergymen, and the sanctuary youths in large number. Of the robes of these, Mrs. Morris has for years been the zealous custodian. The choir of the church rendered the sweet solemn chant and dirges of the ritual in a most effective manner, impressing the great audience of friends, several of whom were colored, with the dignity and sadness of the occasion. After the Mass, the Rev. Father Charlier, S.J., who had been the spiritual director of the departed, delivered the funeral discourse which is appended. Then followed the obsequies, and the remains of Robert Morris, Sr., for the last time were borne down and out from the beautiful temple which he had learned to love as another home.

THE DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BY REV. FATHER CHARLIER, S.J., OF BOSTON.

It is not our custom to speak from this place in commendation of our deceased brethren; for their remains are laid awhile before the altar of propitiation, that, through the sacrifice offered thereon, God may have mercy on their sins. But on this occasion we wish to make an exception, out of special regard for the religious character of our Christian friend.

In such a presence as this, the question which holy Job put to himself, forcibly suggests itself to the mind, "Man when he shall be dead, and stripped and consumed, I pray you, where is he?" (Job, xiv. 10.) Death, my brethren, is a dreadful mystery. It is dreadful, this taking off, by an invisible hand, of the fellow-man with whom we walked side by side for years; of the friend and brother to whom we

were bound by the tenderest ties, with whom we long lived in mutual love and sympathy ; and this, too, without knowing whither he has been taken. As we recall his manner of life, the various events of his career, his sayings and his doings, the circumstances of his death, the anxious question constantly recurs, Where is he? The material part of his being, the body, we know where it goes and what becomes of it. It is consigned to the earth, and returns into the dust from which it was originally made. But the soul, the immortal soul, made in the image and likeness of its Maker, made capable of knowing and loving him, capable of glorifying him by a rational free service, the soul destined to everlasting union with him, — where is it, and what becomes of it?

To this question, none but a conditional answer can be given.

If the Christian who leaves this world has lived mindful of the fact that, being a creature, he belongs entirely and absolutely to his Creator, and is therefore bound to make that Creator's will the end and object of his existence, then the soul, on being freed from its earthly tenement, returns to its Maker to enjoy supreme happiness with Him who is both our First Cause and our Last End.

But if he mistook the meaning and purpose of life, which in God's intention is a period of probation ; if, as a consequence, he overlooked the great Christian law of self-denial, so emphatically inculcated by the Redeemer of the world, — in a word, if he allowed the cares of life, worldly ambition, the greed of gain or the love of pleasure to make him forget his duty to God, oh ! then, it is dreadful, it is distressing beyond measure, to think of the answer to the question, Where is he?

As regards the brother whom death has just taken from us, we entertain a well-founded hope that he has not lived in vain; that he has found acceptance in the sight of the Sovereign Judge. His Christian life, and more especially his Christian death, are our warrant for this hope. These may be put before you in a few words. You are aware that Mr. Morris was not a Catholic from childhood. It was his misfortune to have been brought up in strong prejudices against the Catholic Church; these prejudices developed into hostility when his wife, called by grace, asked and obtained admittance into that church's pale. He was thereupon decidedly opposed to the observance of Catholic practices in his family; he would not hear of it. God, however, had designs of mercy upon him. His grace often works wonderful changes in the hearts of men who sincerely love the truth and are willing to make every sacrifice for it. The example of his pious wife, chiefly aided, of course, by grace, gradually modified his religious views and softened his unfriendly feelings. He soon began to think that a religion which inspires fidelity to conscience at the cost of much that is dear to nature, cannot be devoid of good sound principles, must furnish its adherents with more than merely natural motives. He reflected much, he investigated the claims of the Church to his allegiance; and, what is more, he prayed, his family prayed; and God, who has promised to grant everything to earnest, persevering prayer, could not withhold from him what he so diligently sought, — *the knowledge of the truth*. The result of his investigation was a firm conviction that if he would save his soul he must make his submission to the Church. Once convinced of this duty, he did not hesitate; laying aside all worldly considerations,

all human respect, regardless of what worldly friends might think or say; he made public profession of his belief; and this belief he meant to be thoroughly practical. He seemed from the first to have fully understood the words of our blessed Lord, "Unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xviii. 3.) With childlike docility, he not only submitted to be taught, but earnestly wished to be instructed in all his Christian duties. In fact, the great characteristic of his religious life was fidelity to duty. Twice every Sunday he was seen attending the divine service with his family. Not a month passed without his making an humble confession of whatever faults he might think himself guilty. This confession was his preparation for coming to the holy table, where he received the living bread which strengthened him for the performance of faithful Christian work; and so he lived and so he died. Death did not find him unprepared; at the first sign of its approach he lost no time in settling his account with God, in anticipation of the impending judgment. Having received the last sacraments of the Church, he expressed himself satisfied and ready to obey the summons. When the supreme moment came he calmly and trustfully committed his soul to the divine mercy.

In what we have said of the worth and character of Mr. Morris, we do not pretend that he was altogether free from the little failings to which our nature is so prone; but in all essentials he was a worthy, working citizen, an honor to his color and his creed. For the good he has done, then, standing about his remains, may we say thus much in his praise; for the little debts he yet may owe to God's searching

justice, brothers with him in the communion of saints, in which his faith was so strong, we pray that God may have mercy, and quickly grant him eternal rest and peace.

At the conclusion of the funeral obsequies, the body of the deceased was conveyed to the Catholic Cemetery, South End, Boston, where it was interred with appropriate and imposing ceremonies characteristic of the Catholic Church. A large number of distinguished citizens were present.

MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SUFFOLK BAR.

The bar meeting in Boston, called to commemorate the life and death of Mr. Robert Morris, a well-known lawyer, was held in the room of the Supreme Judicial Court on the morning of December 16, 1882, at ten o'clock, and exhibited such an assemblage of the bar and the public as has seldom been seen, except upon occasions of the deaths of the most eminent men of the profession. The Hon. Dwight Foster presided, with Hon. George L. Ruffin as secretary; and among the representatives of the bar were noticed such men as John C. Park, Seth J. Thomas, Thomas S. Harlow, George W. Searle, E. G. Walker, Judge Russell, Thomas Riley, and many others. Mr. Ruffin presented a series of resolutions, and followed them by a most excellent speech, more particularly discussing the relations of the deceased to his own race. The resolutions were seconded by Mr. John C. Park, who followed with a touching tribute to the memory of the deceased. He was followed by Judge Russell in an elaborate and feeling tribute. Mr. Harlow then gave reminiscences of a personal nature, they having occupied offices on the same floor, at the beginning of Mr. Morris' legal life. The chairman then called upon Mr. George W. Searle, who responded in substance as given below. Mr. E. G. Walker was the next speaker, and delivered a eulogy of surpassing pathos and touching respect to the memory of his deceased friend. Mr. Thomas Riley closed the speaking in a most feeling and creditable manner. Following are appended some of the addresses delivered on the above occasion.

REMARKS OF THOMAS S. HARLOW, ESQ.

MR. CHAIRMAN :

I had not intended to take any more than a silent part in the proceedings of this meeting, and I do not now feel that I can add to the touching and appropriate tributes to the memory of our departed friend and brother which have already been paid. And yet my long acquaintance with Mr. Morris, reaching back nearly forty years, to the time when he was a clerk in the office of the late Ellis Gray Loring, one, I may say, of the very few offices in this city at that time where a colored clerk or student could have found admission, and my personal attachment and regard for him, make me unwilling to let this occasion pass without adding a brief expression of my own feelings. In all that has been said of him, of his energy, his industry, his faithfulness to his clients, and his unfailing good temper and kindness, I most heartily concur. In the early part of his professional career, long before he had attained the success and the general recognition of his worth and of professional ability which made the latter part of his life more pleasant, he had many obstacles and many prejudices to encounter; and I confess I should have been glad to see here this morning, among those assembled to pay honor to his memory, the highly respectable member of the Suffolk Bar who told me many years ago that he did not care to practise in the courts now, since they had got to "letting niggers in."

Mr. Morris and myself were once assigned by the Supreme Court as counsel for the defence of a young colored woman, indicted for the murder of her child; and it being, as I think, his first capital case, he entered upon the work of preparation with great zeal and energy, leaving no stone unturned in his search for evidence to sustain our theory of the case; but when we had got nearly ready for a trial, not a little, I think, to Mr. Morris' disappointment, the Attorney General concurred in our view of the evidence, and entered a *nolle prosequi*.

During all the exciting scenes which followed the enactment of the last (yes, forever the *last*) fugitive-slave law, our late brother and friend was true to his race and to his instincts of freedom, and rendered no small services to the many fugitives who passed through Boston to the land of refuge. It was in this building, in which the United States Courts were then held, that the decree of the commissioners was rendered, remanding the well-remembered Shadrach to a life-long bondage; but scarcely was the decision announced when the court-room door was opened by some one within (said upon pretty good evidence to have been Mr. Morris), and a signal given to the crowd of white and colored men who filled the corridor, anxiously waiting for the result of the hearing. The excited and uncontrollable mass swarmed in, heedless of all attempts of the officers to keep them back; the genial deputy marshal, so well remembered by the older members of the bar, took refuge, it was said, under the table, and with a suddenness and a fervor which might almost be compared to the chariot of fire which swept away the prophet Elijah, Shadrach, enveloped in the cloud which darkened the whole room, disappeared from the view of those who claimed to own him, and was next heard of in Canada. For his share in this breach of law, Mr. Morris was indicted in the Circuit Court and brought to trial before Judge Curtis. The District Attorney, aided by one of the ablest members of the Essex bar, called in specially to aid in the prosecutions growing out of this affair, used his best efforts to secure a conviction; but, thank God! the time had not yet come, and I trust will never come, when a Massachusetts jury could be made to pronounce it a crime to aid in the escape of a fugitive from slavery.

Mr. Morris had that rare faculty, so valuable to a lawyer, of "thinking while on his feet." His self-possession seemed perfect. He never seemed confused or taken by surprise. An unexpected and damaging answer from the witness would be met by an apparently casual remark which completely parried its force. He seemed always ready with a reply to any new point made by his

opponent. Not a great lawyer, yet what law he had was always at his command, ready for use. His unfailing good-humor was of great service to him. I do not think I ever saw him out of temper, and I have seen him fairly laugh away what seemed a pretty good case upon the evidence, carrying with him court, jury and spectators, while the opposing counsel hardly knew what had hurt him when the adverse verdict was rendered. He was not at all thin-skinned, or sensitive to jokes upon his color; and I have seen his eyes sparkle with fun as he told how his Irish clients, who were not supposed to look with any special favor upon his race, would, when they got into any trouble, go, as they said, "straight up to nigger Morris."

During my long acquaintance with Mr. Morris (and for some years our offices were on the same floor), I never knew him do an act or give utterance to any opinion or sentiment which he would be unwilling the world should know. He has made for himself an honorable record; and those who gave him the hand of kindness in early life, and helped him to reach the position which he so well maintained, may well rejoice that their kindness was so well bestowed.

REMARKS OF GEO. W. SEARLE, ESQ.

Death has thinned the ranks of the bench and the bar alike within about a year in a manner seldom before witnessed within so short a period of time. Somerby, Durant, Dana and Healy, a little preceded, while Sweetser, Bradley and Morris are names sad to recall as among the dead within the year now drawing to its close. Putnam and Wilkinson, names revered by us all, must be ranked among those who have died within the same short span. These are sad and melancholy reminders of the shifting scenes of this our mortal life upon the bench and at the bar. The reminder which comes in the death of Mr. Morris touches one, at least,

with quick grief and poignant sorrow. This commemorative audience attests that no common event calls us together. The essential moral of the event is that the humble colored office-boy of Ellis Gray Loring has lived a successful life, and passed away leaving a record of which any man, without regard to color, might well be proud. All that was mortal of Robert Morris having been committed to the earth amid the solemnly gorgeous offices of the Church, it is beyond all question fitting that a life so active in our ranks, a character so pronounced, and a career so uniquely successful, should be noted by at least an hour's pause in the busy activities of this temple of justice, to analyze the causes of that success, and mark the event of its close. This is due to his memory, and to ourselves as belonging to the body of advocates.

Some, among them myself, recognize a closer claim of life-long friendship, and therefore feel the blow as a personal bereavement. I was indebted to him, during a course of thirty-five years' practice by his side, for many acts of kindness and professional courtesy, and I gladly embrace this opportunity to publicly recognize the obligation. Your call is therefore imperative. On these sad personal occasions, the silent tongue and the listening ear would be to me much more agreeable than the speaking, ever so briefly. But there is such a thing as professional duty. To respond to such a demand is an obligation not to be shunned. We, the compeers of the deceased, are rightly held as attesting witnesses of the career now closed and the life lived.

I knew Robert Morris from the outset to the close, and in a manner knew him well. I would with a sad heart and a trembling tongue simply bear witness of what I saw and knew of his daily life and character during a career of nearly forty years, now closed and sealed forever. The memory and the fame of the first American colored lawyer will long be treasured in the annals of the Suffolk bar, and rest forever embalmed in the hearts of his brethren. His career was indeed a type of American civilization. Neither the English nor the French bar has to my knowledge ever had a

colored lawyer in its ranks. It certainly was true in 1847, when Mr. Morris came to our bar. It was for America, and for Boston, to present the pioneer colored attorney in the person of the deceased. I recall as of yesterday his advent to the bar and his early course of practice. Although he was the first, and at that time the only, colored lawyer, there was no prejudice against him on the color line. Something has been said, and well said, as to the bar situation when Mr. Morris came to the bar. I remember it distinctly as a youngster would an event of no special interest, for of course Mr. Morris had then made no mark, and given no promise of the brilliant success which he afterwards achieved. I do not purpose to say or to hint anything against the bar of that day. It was a splendid fraternity, with Webster at its head, and Choate and Loring and Bartlett, and many others, standing close to him. But the advent of a negro lawyer was an experiment, and open to the natural repugnance of a conservative profession to new things and new men. He was generally liked from the beginning by the bar. No one turned a cold shoulder or cast an averted eye. A slur was unheard of. No one sneered and no one laughed at the new comer. For this absence of substantial opposition to the colored element, for the first time introduced into the practice of the law, there were accidental causes favoring Mr. Morris personally. Primarily, he was known and felt to be a self-made man. He had conquered low birth and iron fortune in a manner quite unusual even in the history of the self-made. From a colored office-boy and servant he had come to be a colored lawyer, and been introduced from menial toil to the honorable dignity of an advocate. This was in and of itself a recommendation to favor among generous and liberal, if exclusive, men. But he was not the first man who had come to the bar under difficulties and worked up to professional place and position. He needed other helps, and he had them. He was doubtless much indebted to the friendship of his patron, Ellis Gray Loring, and coming to the bar under his wing he was respected as he otherwise might not have been. Certain it is, and it is to the credit of the

bar of that day, there was no general opposition to the new man, colored as he was. More than this, there was a decided friendliness towards him quite unusual to the ordinary newly admitted young attorney. He was received with open arms by the bar, and recognized by the community as one to be patronized, and not one to be neglected or slighted, still less insulted or abused. At this point it is only simple candor to concede that it is quite likely that he owed somewhat of his early prestige and immediate success to the fact that he was a colored man. He thus became a representative man, by virtue of being first and alone in the start, quite as much as by virtue of superior endowments or uncommon acquirements. Many an anti-slavery man then doubtless patronized, in a small way at least, the young colored advocate, simply because he *was* colored; and it seemed a duty to practically do what they had long preached in regard to the intellectual equality of the colored and the white man.

Indeed, I have sometimes, as doubtless many another has, found myself speculating on the problem of whether his color did not actually improve his chances, and consequently whether he would have met anywhere near such early and continued success had he been white instead of black. I have always suspected that he would not have done so well, or succeeded so early. But of course he would not have kept up the march of success had he not had both ability to make himself useful to clients, industry to utilize that ability, and zeal to seize his opportunities. He, from the start, up to his last sickness, was diligent in business, husbanding his opportunities, and holding his gains in a steady and firm hand. The patronage of fair opportunity came to him early, and remained with him long. There is no occasion for extravagant eulogy while gathered in solemn awe around the bier of the dead. It is rather the time to be discriminating as well as just. Our departed friend would have been the last to desire puffing or flattery. Robert Morris was certainly a successful practising lawyer. He as certainly was not a great jurist, nor even a learned lawyer. He had a fair

law library, but he was not a bookish man, and his line of practice did not call for large drafts upon the fountains of jurisprudence. He was, however, a fine practical lawyer. Business was his forte and his delight. Mr. Ruffin has said that he was a man of gentlemanlike tastes, and lived well, and that was unquestionably the fact; but he was not a man of scholarly tastes, and made no pretence to the elegant culture of the man of letters. It was his ability to render practical aid to his clients that constituted his hold upon the large clientage that he gathered around him. He was not a man of legal sentiment, nor a thinker of broad views of principles. His mind took a practical turn. He tried cases on facts, and left the refinements and technicalities of law to others who had mastered them. He had no ambition for the repute of learning, or eloquence, or elegance; and yet he had somewhat of all three, and what he had he used to the best practical advantage. He was a man of eminent sense, sound judgment, ripe discretion, and dexterous movement in the conduct of a case, not the heaviest or the largest.

He often—perhaps it is safe to say that he habitually—succeeded in making his jury, his audience, and even the judge, laugh with him; but no one ever laughed *at* him in the most grotesque exhibitions of his peculiar style of speech and conduct of a case. He had wit and humor in some considerable degree. He was, after a style peculiar and unique, an eloquent man. The eloquence of Robert Morris! yes, if eloquence consists in influencing men by public speech, he richly deserved to be designated eloquent, for he possessed that faculty, and used it with telling effect, and solid results told of his power. He often laughed a jury into a verdict. He quite as often coaxed them into one, where one could not have been secured by bullying, by severe reasoning, or close thinking and elegant culture. He was a man of very considerable resources as a jury lawyer. It was the safe and prudent, rather than the grand and lofty, strategy that he followed in the management of a case. He was ingenious in planning, and artistic in

filling up, the outline of a defence. He was skilful, discreet and judicious in cross-examination. He was brief, pointed and direct therein. And in the jury address he was skilful if not deep. He was persuasive and plausible, if he was not strong and powerful. He used facts with a strong hand. He painted them in a picturesque manner, and arrayed them with telling effect. He commented on witnesses with a cunning shrewdness which evinced his nice knowledge of human nature. In a word, he discussed evidence with a wise practical turn which impressed and convinced.

His moral standing was of the highest. His integrity was unquestioned, and he was an honorable practitioner in the best sense of the term. No scandal ever soiled his record as a practising lawyer, even in seeming appearance, and still less in reality. He looked out for himself, indeed, but he also looked out for his clients, sharply and shrewdly. He was true as steel, and brave as a lion, in professional fidelity to a client. He was always good-humored and good-tempered. He was ready to accommodate, and quick to reciprocate favors. He treasured no animosities. The result was that he had many friends and few or no enemies. In the strife of the bar, where we are, by virtue of our office, antagonists at war, this is a merit which should be placed to his credit, now that he is no more. He was—I emphasize by repeating—exceedingly faithful to his humble clients. He seldom showed the white feather, and he never betrayed them. He was ready to fight the weakest case and take his chances. He was, in a word, professionally brave, independent, chivalrous, decorous. He was not a public man of any considerable prominence, except as his position as a practising lawyer made him a representative man of his race. He held no public office, and courted no office so much as his cosy and well-ordered law-office. During the fugitive-slave excitement which has been referred to, he took and maintained the position which became him as of the colored race, and he was bold and outspoken both in word and action; but this constituted almost the sum total of his public life, as distinguished from his

professional life. A representative man he certainly was ; but was he *the* representative colored man of his era? I have heard him and his career so rated, even by one so competent to judge as my friend and his friend, E. G. Walker, who sits here beside me. I do not think that getting a discriminating estimate. The foremost colored man of his era never graced and adorned the ranks of our noble profession, but charmed and enlightened the platform and the rostrum in the person of Frederick Douglass. But is it too high a placing to say that, next to Frederick Douglass, taking it all in all, stood Robert Morris as the best representative colored man of America in his day and generation?

His life must have been an agreeable as well as a useful one. His busy activity and lucrative practice and easy labors must have rendered the cup of life to him pleasant and sweet, until some year ago he sickened and pined under a combination of disorders, and he became an exile from the courts, mostly the criminal courts, of which he had so long been the life and soul. We missed him as an established and cherished institution from the courts. It was the withdrawal of a light of some significance, if not a prominent luminary. The cause of laughter in others no longer was found in those scenes. Meantime it was fortunate for him that by industry, economy and frugality he had amassed a comfortable competency, and could afford to live without work — a much better condition of things than has come to many another who has won, in the lottery of professional life, only empty glory. He was long away. At last we saw him return, but how changed ! I saw him upon the street, and the change shocked me. He had grown gray. He looked twenty years older than when last seen. He was shrivelled and emaciated, a physical wreck of what was once robust manhood. I saw him shortly after in court, but only as a silent listener to the activity of others, not a belted champion mingling in the conflicts of the bar. He seemed improved, and the prospect of entire recovery made him gay and cheerful. But soon he was missed again, and once more relegated to the exile of

home ; and then, but shortly after, on Tuesday last, the sad news came that all was over, and the curtain drawn on the mortal life of Robert Morris. "Peace and rest to the spirit of our departed associate," is, I believe, the common prayer of us all, — I am sure it is mine.

ADDRESS OF JUDGE RUSSELL.

MR. CHAIRMAN :

A wanderer from the bar, I return for an hour to express my regard for one whom I often met, and whom I honestly admired. The man who triumphs over adverse circumstances is always worthy of respect. We love to repeat the poet's tribute to him :

"Who breaks his birth's invidious bar
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star."

Our friend in his early days seemed hardly to have the skirts of happy chance to grasp. He had nothing to cheer him except the kindness of one to whom we cannot refer without a word of honor — Ellis Gray Loring, one of the men who redeem law from its reproach of narrowing, while it sharpens the faculties ; a lawyer whose clients were all that are desolate and oppressed ; a pure spirit who has long since heard the final judgment pronounced in favor of those who, gifted with many talents, have held them in strict trust for the service of the poorest and most needy of mankind.

But even with his aid how slight was the encouragement for such a youth as Robert Morris ! Many of you do not remember the "unnumbered smiling" that rippled through Court Street when his purpose was announced. What hope had he of business ? Was it quite sure that he would ever be admitted to the bar ? Was there not — is there not — an "annex" to the Constitution of this State declaring that the thing which has not been shall never be ?

Against his success was leagued every mean prejudice and every great interest in the community — every one, except the interest of humanity; and how feeble that seemed for many a long sad year!

How he triumphed you all know, sustained by inexhaustible good-nature, winning victories by his rare wit and humor, aided at last by the prevalence of broader views, and doing his full share to establish those views. It is his special honor that in the days of his success he never shrank from the cause to which he was allied by birth. There might have been a temptation to lower the standard, to separate himself a little from his kindred. In the darkest days he never did this. He never sought to withdraw one hair's breadth from the blackest and most despised of men. He was identified with all that was unpopular. When he gained clients who differed with him, he gained them in spite of himself.

It is often said that he deserves credit because of what he did for his race. I thank him because of what he did for ours. While it is sad to be the victim of low prejudice, it is worse to be its slave; and Robert Morris did a man's work toward emancipating the white men of this community from that yoke.

Not very learned, nor pretending to be so, not very eloquent, nor very profound, he was faithful to his clients, and faithful to his one great idea. Unfailing fidelity, with untiring good-humor — this was the substance of his life.

"And sure the Eternal Master found
The single talent well employed."

HON. PATRICK A. COLLINS

Said he had known Robert Morris for twenty-six years. I knew him as a boy in his office, professing the same creed and attending the same services for many years, in his home and at the bar, in social and in public life. I saw all his sides, and can testify that he was modest, courageous, faithful and honest, a conscientious lawyer and a Christian gentleman. It is a great satisfaction

that his life was so rounded ; that, coming to the bar thirty-five years ago, received with curiosity mingled with derision, he should live to enjoy the full respect and confidence of the bench, the bar and the public. It is a satisfaction, also, that if he did not live to see the prejudice which assailed his race completely pass away, he did live to see it sensibly diminished. We can all bear testimony to his cheerful disposition, his uniform good-nature. He had sunshine in his heart. To him life was not grim with terrors and clouded with melancholy. It was full of warmth and duty and friendship. He went through it like a man, faithful to all his duties, and generous to all his kind. I think also it may be said that he contemplated death not as a tragedy, but as a transformation, and passed over to the other side at peace with the world, and filled with hope of happiness above. We may lay in the grave abler men, and lawyers of greater grasp, but none that will be remembered and missed more than Robert Morris.

ROBERT MORRIS MEMORIAL MEETING.

A public meeting, commemorative of the life and character of the late Robert Morris, was held in the Charles Street Church on the evening of March 5, 1882, and was very largely attended. George L. Ruffin acted as president, while such well-known names as John J. Smith, Wendell Phillips, Hon. P. A. Collins, William Lloyd Garrison, Jr., George T. Downing, Thomas Gargan, and others, were read as vice-presidents, with J. M. Trotter, J. C. Chappelle and George H. White as secretaries. A eulogy of Mr. Morris was delivered by Edwin G. Walker (which is appended), a commemorative poem composed by Elijah W. Smith was read by J. M. Trotter, and several musical selections were rendered.

The meeting was called to order by Lieut. James M. Trotter, who read the following call:—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

At a meeting of the citizens of Boston to take notice of the death of Robert Morris, Esq., counsellor, held December 14, 1882, in North Russell Street Church, of which Dr. Wm. Wells Brown was chairman, it was unanimously voted, that at some day in the near future a public meeting should be called to commemorate the notable life and sterling character of the deceased gentleman mentioned, and a committee was appointed to make all necessary arrangements. This assemblage to-night is the result of the arrangements made, and the call issued by the committee. The following is a list of the officers chosen for the memorial:—

President — Geo. L. Ruffin.

Vice-Presidents — Jno. J. Smith, Wendell Phillips, Hon. P. A. Collins, Lewis Hayden, Rev. Wm. A. Burch, Rev. Mr. O'Connor, Jno. J. Fatal, Seth J. Thomas, Chas. L. Mitchell, Rev. L. G. Walden, Geo. W. Lowther, Hon. S. E. Sewall, Rev. Peter Smith, Hon. Thomas Russell, Wm. H. Dupree, Dr. Wm. Wells Brown, Jno. Boyle O'Reilly, Geo. T. Downing, Rev. G. H. Bell, Hon. Chas. W. Slack, Elijah W. Smith, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Jr., Rev. T. J. Cooper, Jno. M. Lenox, Gen. W. W. Blackmar, J. H. Lewis, Theo. D. Weld, David B. Hodsdon, J. F. Andrews, Thos. Riley, Rev. J. W. Brown, Jas. H. Wolff, Geo. W. Searle, Jno. B. Bailey, Rev. J. H. Carter, J. Milton Clark, T. A. Ridley, R. S. Brown, Rev. Peter Randolph, Robt. Meekin, Jno. Freedom, Thomas Thomas.

Secretaries — James M. Trotter, Julius C. Chappelle, Geo. H. White.

ADDRESS OF GEORGE L. RUFFIN, ESQ.

Mr. Ruffin, on taking the chair, delivered the following brief and appropriate address : —

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

When the long and toilsome summer day is ended and twilight lingers upon the western sky, there come o'er the pensive heart deep feelings of sweet repose ; peace like a river fills the soul. The conflicts of life must sometime cease. Human labor must at some time end, and to the tired laborer, rest is welcome. To-night, when there shall be sounded the roll-call of workmen, one voice will not respond. Its familiar tones will nevermore be heard. It is hushed in the stillness of death. Another worker has left the ranks. His conflicts are over. His labor is ended. "After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well." Standing about our brother's open grave to-day, resignation is ours. Our poor words will be said, some flowers may be strewn, the requiem will be sung, and then

—the long silence of perfect rest. But the lesson of his well-ordered life, his devotion to his race, his tireless industry and well-performed duty, remain to us for our inspiration and our example.

Ladies and gentlemen, you will now please give your attention to a eulogy to be pronounced by Hon. Edwin G. Walker upon the life, character and public service of the late Robert Morris.

EULOGY OF HON. EDWIN G. WALKER.

Whenever a man dies who has acted a part in any of the great contests that have at different periods convulsed the world, who has caused the people of his time and nation to stand, as it were, and gaze with wonder on the success that has attended the labor and devotion to the cause by him espoused, those who were his friends and neighbors while in life are unwilling to turn away from his new-made grave without placing upon record some token of their esteem, some evidence that they loved the memory of their countryman and their friend.

The year 1882, in completing the number of those who went with it to their long home, includes in its register the names of two men whose lives and acts have placed them among the foremost, if not at the very front, of the vindicators of the capacity and manhood of the colored people of America.

Henry Highland Garnett and Robert Morris in their day and time stood out most conspicuously the irrepressible representatives and champions of about one seventh of the population of this country.

Mr. Garnett has gone from us; and when he expired beneath the palm tree in the home of his ancestors, in the land that gave birth to Hanno, Hamilcar, Imilcon and Hannibal, who will say that this stalwart defender of his race could have found a more fitting place from which to have started on his journey to his God?

Yes! Garnett, the scholar, orator and statesman, the defender and unflinching champion of his race, has gone to rest within the

past year, taking with him to the great Jehovah the benedictions of over six millions of people, for whose liberation both he and John Brown delighted to counsel together.

But this is not the time or place to sound the praises of this son of the fugitive from American despotism ; in other places, and by those more able to portray the virtues, devotion and bravery of Mr. Garnett, has the story been told.

On the twelfth day of December last, scarcely had the first blush of approaching dawn commenced rolling away the curtain of night, when the angel of death made his appearance at the home of one whose life, labors and exit have made it proper for us to be here to-day.

The origin, labors and character of Robert Morris entitle him to the voice and the brain of some one more skilful than myself ; but at your bidding, agreeing as I do with you that to the departed there is due a debt of gratitude that we can never pay, I am here to mourn with you, because we shall see him no more on earth, and to rejoice with you over his triumphs.

The father of Robert Morris was born in Ipswich in this State ; his grandfather, Cumono Morris, was a native African, and was carried to Ipswich when he was quite young. He was held in high esteem by all who knew him, and one of the by-ways of the town, to this day, in remembrance of him, bears the name of Cumono Lane.

Mr. Morris' father, York Morris, at an early age moved to Salem, where he became acquainted with a maiden named Nancy Thomas, to whom he was afterwards married.

Miss Thomas was a native of Salem, and lived to the good old age of eighty-six, dying within the last four years.

York Morris, the father of our friend, was a man much loved and respected by the people among whom he lived ; but he wore the badge of the race that in this country made it next to impossible for him to occupy any position except that of a menial. So he lived along in the town of Salem, doing the kind of work that the

colored people in those days were compelled to content themselves with. But he managed to acquire some property and to make a home for his wife and eleven children. He died in Salem several years ago at the age of forty-nine.

On the eighth day of June, 1823, Robert Morris was born. He remained at home helping his father, and struggling at the same time to get the rudiments of an education, until he was thirteen years of age. He was a favorite, even as a table-boy, among the wealthy people of Salem, where lived a family named King, a connection of Mrs. Ellis Gray Loring, of Boston.

It was the custom of the Lorings to visit this family on Thanksgiving days, and it was upon one of these occasions that young Robert was employed to wait on the table, and first met that good and noble-souled man, Mr. Loring. Mr. Loring wanted a boy about Robert's age to do chores at his home in Boston; the matter was talked over with the boy's mother, and an arrangement was made for him to leave Salem with them the next day, for Boston.

When the hour arrived for the Loring family to start for home, the stage—it was before the day of railroads and palace cars—was driven up to the door of the King residence, and Mr. Loring and his family started for Boston. It was a bitter cold day; at a period when a man, woman or child, no matter what might be the condition of the weather, whether it was raining or snowing, or the thermometer might be at the lowest point, if the traveller had noticeably any of the negro's blood in his or her veins, there was no place for such an one, though sick and nigh unto death, but on the box with the driver, outside. And so on that cold and bleak November day, our friend, the boy of thirteen, that has since proved himself to be the first successful colored lawyer in this country, came from his home to the Athens of America.

He commenced his duties in the service of Mr. Loring as a servant, and he remained in that capacity for a number of years.

The young man employed in Mr. Loring's office to do copying

and other work becoming neglectful of his duty, young Robert was sent to the office in the early mornings to supply his place. Naturally a good penman, Robert was given copying to do in the office, often having to finish it at home after performing other duties. For some time he supplied the place of servant, office-boy and clerk, and so well and intelligently did he acquit himself, that Mr. Loring — who, by the way, was one of the earliest abolitionists in this country — called Robert to him one day and said, “Robert, you are capable of making something of yourself. Now I want you to tell me what you want to do, and I will secure for you the opportunity to make the trial. Do you wish to learn a trade, or do you wish to study law?” The lad replied that he desired to read law; and from that moment the grandson of the untaught African commenced to prepare himself to enter the profession that De Tocqueville has said contains the aristocracy of America.

For several years Mr. Morris was in Mr. Loring’s office, filling the position of clerk and student, and during all this time no person has ever been found, that came in contact with our friend in those days, that has spoken of him and his actions then otherwise than in confirmation of the statement that he was true to himself and to those who entrusted to him the performance of any duty. He has been called shrewd and cunning. If there is any foundation for statements like these, then I am here to utter my protest against the connection of his name with these words, unless the term cunning is accompanied with this qualification. Only when he thought it was necessary to secure for some one that had intrusted to him something that to his mind made it proper for him to be careful how he advanced towards its execution, did he ever condescend to use anything that ever approximated to cunning.

A very old man, now an officer of one of the Courts of Suffolk County, speaking of the time when he was a constable in the city of Boston, and Robert a boy in the office of Mr. Loring, said that he saw and knew much of him at that time, and that he never saw him appear to be angry; that for energy, perseverance and strat-

egy to advance the interests of his employer, he never met with boy or man that could excel him. He tells how he would appear when he was sent to his office with a writ to be served, how he would come in, and, looking carefully around the room, if there were other persons present, would not deliver the papers so that it would be noticed, but would watch for an opportunity, then do his errand, and be off with a smile on his face ready to do the next thing that came in the line of his duty. This, I say, was not cunning, as the term is generally used. It was discretion, made practical in response to his idea of duty and devotion to those whom he had consented to work for. And in saying this, I but imperfectly convey to you that which has often occurred to me while looking at and talking with Mr. Morris.

If nearly fifty years ago he had been without the qualifications I have just spoken of, I tell you, sir, that in the loss of the boy that he was, we should have been deprived of the man that has performed for his race in this country a piece of difficult work that, but for him, would not, in my humble opinion, have been accomplished for many a year to come.

Looking at the people of this country as I have in the past, and as I see them now, I do not believe that nearly fifty years ago there was any other colored man living in this land, who had a taste for and an ambition to study and practise law, that could have done so and met with a success as brilliant and real as that which witnessed the close of Mr. Morris' career. I am not now speaking of his wealth. I am speaking of him as the little humble colored boy that laughed at obstacles while he was undermining the walls that closed out from the young of his race opportunities to enter a profession that would afford them many chances to grapple, hand to hand, with the most desperate and shameful prejudice that ever disgraced a Christian people.

When he started he understood what he was aiming at, and he also understood that, at that stage of American civilization, he only could succeed who could present a face of bronze to the hope of

favor, who could be determined, patient, honest, and exceedingly discreet. Not long after he came to Boston, he could be seen actively at work in whatever could be done to advance the interests of the colored people. He associated himself with the young in their literary societies; became a member of the colored Methodist Church; became a class leader, a superintendent of the Sunday school; and wherever he could add anything that tended to accelerate the onward march of the race, young though he was, he placed himself where he could be made available for any proper work.

Let us now pass from the poor uneducated colored boy to the man whose memory we honor and respect.

Shortly after he became of age, he was married to an estimable young lady named Miss Catherine Mason, daughter of Mr. Joseph Mason, a highly respected citizen of Boston. In his wife, Mr. Morris always found a ready sympathizer and an earnest helper in all of his undertakings.

It has been claimed by some that Mr. Morris was the first colored man ever admitted to the bar in this country. This is a mistake, and one that our deceased brother would rectify if he were talking to you at this time. I venture to inform you that a gentleman named Macon B. Allen was admitted to the bar in the State of Maine some two years before he (Mr. Allen) came to Boston. After he came to this city he applied for admission here. This was in the year 1845.

After making an effort in Boston, and not being successful at that time, he was told that if he would come to Worcester on the third day of May, 1845, he could then be examined again, and if found to be competent, he would then be admitted.

Mr. Allen was poor; he lacked the necessary means to pay his way from Boston to Worcester and back; but the young man who had contended with adverse circumstances until he had satisfied himself that success was only a little way in advance of him, was not to be deterred from undertaking a journey from Boston to Worcester; and without money or friends, Mr. Allen walked every

step of the way, and on the third day of May, 1845, he passed a successful examination, and was admitted to practise law in all the courts of this Commonwealth.

I am satisfied that to Macon B. Allen belongs the honor of being the first colored member of the legal profession in this country.

Next to him comes our friend and associate, Mr. Morris. It was on the second day of February, 1847, that we find him knocking at the door of the Suffolk bar, and praying to be admitted, so that he might enter upon the work to which he had consecrated his life.

From the moment he entered the doors of the Court House an authorized attorney at law, up to the hour when the Supreme Judge cited him to appear before his august tribunal, the watchful eyes of the friend, of the sceptic and of the enemies of his race were constantly upon him, carefully noting each step taken, discussing every opportunity that presented itself to him, and commenting upon his ability to advance, until the success that crowned his efforts proved beyond all possible doubt that, with like advantages, the law of averages embraced the black as well as the white man.

He has told me of his first case. It was an action brought by a colored man for services rendered. As the defendant had employed an attorney to represent his side of the case, just before the day of the trial our friend called upon him, so as to make it certain there should be no occasion for delay.

Going into the office of this gentleman in his usual happy way, Mr. Morris addressed him; but he was received by his brother attorney in a manner calculated to embarrass him. He ventured to tell his business, however. The gentleman, who had not even the politeness to ask Mr. Morris to a seat, and who had remained sitting all the time himself, started up from his chair, and shaking his fist in his face said, "Are you going to try that case?" On being answered in the affirmative, he shouted at the top of his voice,

"Then I will give you the devil!" This is the way Mr. Morris was met when preparing to try his first jury case.

Mr. Morris, after telling me this experience, said that he left the man's office with a heavy heart, and with a feeling that, if that was the way he was to be treated by the members of the bar in his practice, for the moment he doubted his ability to face the storm. Here he stopped, and, as it seemed to me, was holding his breath. In another moment he spoke out and said, "I went to my office. I sat down, and I cried. I thought of the mighty odds against which I had to contend, and then it was that I made the vow that I have never broken. It was this: I would prove myself to be a man and a gentleman, and succeed in the practice of the law, or I would die." We will see when we get a little farther along whether or not this vow was not carried out to its full completion.

But let us go back to his ever-memorable first jury case. Said he, "The day for the trial of the case came around, but the gentleman who insulted me in his own office was not there. Another attorney had been retained to try the case against me. But there was something in the court room that morning that made me feel like a giant. The court room was filled with colored people, and I could see, expressed on the faces of every one of them, a wish that I might win the first case that had ever been tried before a jury by a colored attorney in this country.

"At last my case was called; I went to the work and tried it for all it was worth; and until the evidence was all in, the arguments on both sides made, the judge's charge concluded and the case given to the jury, I spared no pains to win. The jury after being out a short time returned, and when the foreman in reply to the clerk answered that the jury had found for the plaintiff, my heart bounded up, and my people in the court room acted as if they would shout for joy. That," said Mr. Morris, "was my first jury case."

In the trial of this action, Mr. Morris displayed a knowledge of

the law applicable to the case, and an ability to put in evidence and cross-examine witnesses, that was rarely excelled by any of the gentlemen of the bar in those days; and if rumor has it correctly, the Suffolk bar at that time was not behind, if it was not somewhat in advance of, what it is at the present time.

It was the trial of this first case that made apparent beyond all doubt the fact that Mr. Morris possessed the qualifications to make him a successful advocate. And from that hour there was no question of his future, unless, indeed, the cunning work of foes could be made more than a match for him and his friends.

Time passed on, and the young lawyer that commenced with a few small claims, gradually came into popularity with persons who became charged with the commission of offences against the laws of the country, and the time came when the young attorney who had been snubbed and insulted on account of his color, and only on account of his color, could show upon his docket as many, if not more, criminal cases than any other lawyer in Suffolk County.

It is true that his clients were from among the humble, the actually poor, and the middling classes, both white and colored, a very large majority of them being white. For miles and miles around the people had heard of Robert Morris, and when trouble beset them, would try and procure the services of our friend. His reputation was not confined to Boston or Suffolk County; but everywhere in the state, men spoke in terms of highest praise of Boston's favorite criminal advocate.

But we must not go farther without calling attention to a part of the history of Mr. Morris that is very important, and of which I have heard persons remark that it is as strange as it is important. To me, after the experience that I have had, it is not at all strange; its importance, when considering the causes that led to the success of Mr. Morris, is incalculable. To the Irish people and their descendants in and about Boston and vicinity, is due a large amount of credit for whatever of success our friend met with in the business of a practising attorney.

To neglect to concede to this element this much, would be to do an injustice that he when living was always careful to avoid.

No class of persons labored more earnestly and with truer hearts to make him financially a successful lawyer than they. Safe it is to say that three quarters of his clients were from amongst them. For the past twenty-five years they have accepted him, trusted themselves with him, and been quick to go with him, whenever they thought it would be for his benefit for them to do so. Now, in the presence of hundreds of his race, loved by him and he in return by them, am I compelled to admit that the Irish people of Boston did fully one half of the work that conduced to make him the first really successful colored lawyer in America.

His standing with the members of the bar was as good as that of any other member of the profession. Whenever he met any of his brethren of the bar, whether it was on business or socially, there was always that characteristic smile upon his countenance which was invariably worn by him.

However anxious he might be to gain some point for his client, he never allowed his anxiety to get the better of his judgment and his good-humor. By the steady practice of these qualifications, which were almost marvellous in him, many is the Boston lawyer that will tell you to-day that he got the better of them, in the settlement or on the trial of some case, by his irresistible good-humor. And among all the gentlemen with whom he was active in business, you cannot find any that will say that he was anything but an upright and honorable attorney. He was liked and respected by all of the judges, and at times, it seemed to me, when sitting or waiting in the court room, that his presence removed every trace of gloom from the countenances of those present. The judge, the jury and the spectators would all seem to catch the smile that always came with Robert Morris.

No man that has practised on the criminal side of the Court in Suffolk County, will dispute the correctness of this statement. He could boast of as many verdicts in his favor as any of our attorneys.

More than once have I heard judges say that by his tact and good-nature he had won many cases where, if tried by almost any other attorney, the verdict of the jury would have been reversed.

He made no pretensions to high legal attainments. I have been with him when he has expressed regrets that it had not been his privilege to have the advantages of acquiring a liberal education; and then he would say that "it is no use for us to stop now and worry over the slights and privations we have had to encounter, but we must avail ourselves of every opportunity to gain knowledge and improve."

Choate, Bartlett, Sweetser and Bradley were called successful lawyers, because they won a large percentage of the cases that they tried. Measured by the same standard in the thirty-five years of our friend's practice, he had proven himself to be eminently successful. Confident I am that there is no one that can take from him the merit that is his due in this direction.

I now pass from the consideration of his work as a jurist, to the mightier and more sublime discussion of him as a discreet, devout and fearless defender of his race.

Too many that come up from an humble station in life to a position that gains for them some distinction, are apt to forget the people to whom they belong; but this selfish, foolish and short-sighted quality was not to be found in the composition of the deceased.

I shall always remember what he said to me on the day I was admitted to the bar. After making the motion for my admission, and after the oath had been administered to me, Mr. Morris took me by the hand and said in his happy, earnest way, "Don't ever try to run away from our people." Still holding my hand in his, and looking me steadily in the eye, he said, "Do you ever wear gloves? If you do, take them off and go down among our people."

I remember how, early in my life, I used to come from old Charlestown to what was then known as the Belknap-street Church, and there listen to him in the full vigor of his youthful life, urging the

colored people of Boston to raise their voices and use their votes against the longer continuation of exclusive schools for colored children; and as he would strike terrible blows that would make one feel he would soon topple the buildings in which the objectionable schools were held, to the ground, at the same time you could see him striking at the colored men among us, who, through fear or treachery, were lending themselves to those who were laboring to keep upon us that badge of degradation and disgrace.

Wherever he could bring his weapons to bear, whether in the church or the court room, he never allowed an opportunity to pass when he did not strike that hated thing. He was quick to see an opportunity to disturb and make trouble for those who were degrading his people, and seeing his opportunity, improved it. He was an iconoclast with his hammer in his hand.

When railroad companies refused to allow colored people to ride over their roads only in what was commonly termed the "Jim Crow" car, he availed himself of every opportunity that offered to disturb them. Before the theatres in Boston were opened for colored people as well as whites, our friend would go in person to these places and assert his right to a seat in any part of the house, provided he paid for it as any other gentleman would. He has been insulted by being forced to leave his seat in more than one theatre in Boston, simply because he was a colored man.

More than once has he taken the managers of these places into court, and in other ways did he work for the breaking up of this relic of barbarism. In a like manner did he work for the opening of the lecture rooms to our people, until he had the gratification of seeing public opinion in the community regarding these places fortified by laws that were in perfect accord with his own sense of reason and justice.

He was a man always to be relied upon when there was work to be done for the elevation of the race. When the war for the suppression of the rebellion broke out, he, with other colored gentlemen, went to the State House and offered to raise a regiment of

colored men, which they could have accomplished in three days; and all they asked in return was, that the regiment be officered by men of their own color. This privilege was denied them because the law contained the word "white." Mr. Morris then said that it was not yet time for colored men to go to war, and he did not hesitate in declaring that those were justified who refused to enlist.

At a meeting held in the Twelfth Baptist Church, Governor Andrew presiding, Mr. Morris spoke his mind quite freely about the insertion of the word "white" in the law. An old and tried friend of the race undertook to explain to him that he was mistaken in regard to the status the colored man would occupy in the army. He addressed our friend by the term "Brother Morris." No quicker had the words "Brother Morris" left the lips of the speaker, than Mr. Morris was on his feet, and speaking in a stronger, clearer voice than I ever heard him before he said, "Don't you call me 'brother' until you have taken the word 'white' out of the Constitution!"

It has been asserted that Mr. Morris was lacking in that love and zeal for his country's honor that entitles men to be called patriots. This statement I pronounce to be false from every attitude that it is possible to view it. From my childhood I have known him; and from a very close and intimate acquaintance with him, I feel authorized in saying that there never was a man that trod the soil of this country that had more love for his home and countrymen than he. He loved his country and he loved his race; and when the outrages that had been and were at that time being perpetrated upon his race, had accumulated until it looked as though the weight of iniquity must arouse and bring down the vengeance of Almighty God upon those who were seeking to rivet more firmly than ever the chains of slavery upon his people, he was unwilling to assent to any position for his race in the armies of his country that would put them on a plane below that occupied by the average white man.

He was always open and frank in the presentation of his ideas during the war; and when he openly demanded the same pay and in every way a fair chance with other men who were expected to defend the Federal Government, even though it was discussed in certain circles at that time as to whether it would not be proper to send him to Fort Warren, he but uttered the sentiment of every thinking colored man in the country. His oft-repeated cry, "Oh for a black general!" was prompted and only prompted by his desire to see his country indeed, what it claimed to be, a land in which all the people were free and in the enjoyment of equal rights and privileges.

There could be no grander test of a man's love and devotion to his people than the one that was applied to Robert Morris when the slave-hunter, protected by statute act, attempted to ply his vocation on the sacred soil of Massachusetts. Then it was that he arose in his might, and casting aside all that hope or ambition had held out for him in the past, forgetting even his discretion in his love for his hunted and persecuted brother in chains, he openly and boldly threw himself across the path of the hounds in human form.

Shadrach, Simms and Burns, could you hear them now, would tell you that when our court house was chained up to make it—a slave-pen—the more secure for their detention, Robert Morris, the young and courageous lawyer of those early days, found a way to enter the court house and carry to them such words of encouragement as these: "I am one with others of your race that are waiting and watching for the slightest opportunity that may offer, to attempt to rescue you from the meshes of this unrighteous law, that would deprive you of your God-given rights. I am here to say you shall be free."

When the United States Government put him on trial for the part he took in the rescue of the fugitive Shadrach, he secured for himself a chapter in history that might well be coveted by the proudest man in the State.

Some have said that Mr. Morris could not be severe: this is not my experience with the man. Whenever the rights of his race were called in question, I always found him as bold as a lion and as severe as justice.

He who took Robert Morris to be an "Uncle Tom," did not know his man. In the character of George Harris you get a better description of him, and how he would have dealt for his country and his race if it had been in his power.

In his political opinions, Mr. Morris was what is commonly known as an independent. He did not allow himself to be influenced by the pretentious solicitude of the platforms of either party; he would carefully examine the professions of each, listen to what was said by all, and then think and act for himself.

He was aware of the political strength of his people in this country, and did not fail to comprehend the fact that for the past twenty years they had been standing between two great parties, neither of which had been ready to recognize them only as negroes.

He was too shrewd a man not to see and know that the thoughts and actions of the leaders in both parties kept the American colored man from a fair and equal standing with other American citizens.

He would never permit either organization to claim him for their own. He looked upon them both as being as empty as a bubble, so far as the real rights of the colored man were concerned. He would say that neither of them understand that our people, born in this country, are American citizens, and entitled to be known as such, and not by their color.

His feeling was that while it was important for us to be careful how we moved in party matters, for the present it was our duty to see to it that we did not lose sight of the great fact that our future in the country depended more upon individuals than upon parties.

He studied all questions that were presented for the considera-

tion of the American people, but he could see nothing in any of them that equalled the importance of the work necessary to elevate his race above the utterly helpless condition that slavery had left them in.

Said he to me, "We must hammer away upon the meanness that is practised by those who assume to be the leaders of the people of this country. Slavery is gone ; one of our hands is at liberty. What we want now is, to get at the common people, set them to thinking, and there can be but one opinion of the result. The time will come, in spite of every effort to prevent it, when we shall have both hands free, and when equal rights *shall* prevail ; but until then we have no time for the discussion of any other question in American politics." Said he, "People lecture us upon the constant cry we have kept up about the rights of the black man. They say that we are wrong and injuring our cause : don't you believe it ! Our position now is much like that of the Abolitionist in days gone by. We are taking up this work just where too many of them have left it. Through the medium of politics the full right of our people is finally to come ; but unless we stand out as did these same Abolitionists, we shall never succeed in making party leaders concede to us that which is our due and which they so persistently withhold."

We cannot boast for him any great achievements on the tented field, or any triumphs in our legislative assemblies ; but it can be properly said that he furnished a great deal of the fuel that fired up the hearts of the people of our State, so that they placed in the Congress of the nation such men as Sumner, Wilson and Burlingame, and on the battle-field in defence of liberty and law, brave heroes like Shaw, Hallowell and Sergeant Kearney.

In his later life Mr. Morris severed his connection with the Methodist Church and allied himself with the Roman Catholic Church, in which he remained an earnest, conscientious, outspoken supporter to the end.

His earth work is done. He has gone from us to return no more ;

but behind him he has left a record that is open to the inspection of all.

On the first page I see written, manhood ; next, determination ; then courage, and next kindness. That he was manly, who is there that will dispute us, when we say that he was all a man ?

See him soon after he entered upon the duties of his profession, surrounded by flattery and sneers. But flattery failed to obscure from his sight his true condition ; neither did the sneers of his enemies break down his determination to succeed. That he was brave many of us know ; and from early boyhood to the very last moment of his life, he knew no fear when called upon to meet those who had been unjust to his race.

His unselfishness and kindness of heart were most beautifully exemplified by him in the last moments of his life. His son, to whom he had given every educational advantage that money could afford, and who survived his father but two short weeks, told me that the evening preceding his father's death, he was reclining on the lounge in the sitting-room, when he requested his son and his wife to take seats by his side.

He then took each of them by the hand, and conversed in his usual pleasant way for a while, after which they retired.

Shortly after waking in the morning, Mr. Morris' called for his son, who immediately came to his bedside. Then taking hold of the hands of wife and son, he conversed in the same pleasant manner as on the evening before. Among other things he would say, "I am all right." This he repeated several times, and then for an instant appeared to have lost the power of speech.

Seeing his wife and son in tears, he motioned them not to weep. Then with glad prescience of the blessedness to be, with his eyes fixed heavenward, and his face lit up with the old familiar smile, he turned backward from the river of death just far enough for his cold lips to frame the words "Beautiful ! beautiful !" Then faintly pressing the hands of wife and son he murmured, "I will speak a good word for you when I get there ;" then passed to where forever there is peace.

The most important events in the history of the colored people in this country have transpired during the lifetime of our friend. The Mexican war, the annexation of Texas, the rescinding of the Missouri Compromise, the opening to slavery territory that had been consecrated to freedom, the passage of the fugitive-slave act, the attack upon Charles Sumner in the nation's senate chamber, the execution of John Brown, and the firing on the nation's flag by the slave propagandists, are among the great crimes that have been committed against the nation and the colored people during the lifetime of our friend, that he witnessed and with others labored to avert.

He was permitted to witness the downfall of slavery, and to join with the millions of his race on the first of January, 1863, when with one voice they sang as it never was sung before, —

"Sound the loud timbrel
O'er Egypt's dark sea:
Jehovah has triumphed,
His people are free!"

Who can estimate the value of the lesson that has been taught by him to the young of our race in this country? In spite of his identity with a neglected and injured people in this boasted republic, in spite of all the obstacles that were placed across his path for over thirty-five years that he was in actual business life, he was a living, walking, uncompromising declaration of the intellectual strength and capacity of the American black man.

Very few of those who started with him in life, even though they had the advantage of color, wealth and education, have acquitted themselves as well as he.

Let the colored lad of to-day run over the history of his race from the time Mr. Morris left Salem up to this date, and noting the barriers to success which he was compelled to encounter, tell me, if he can, that his privileges are not better, and that his future is not brighter; that with education, honesty, good sense combined with courage and perseverance, he is not sufficiently fortified

to prevail against the prejudice that is constantly striving against him.

That the chances of the colored youth in America are far in advance of what they were thirty years ago, we cannot deny; but we do not wish to be understood as even intimating that we think his chances of success now are anywhere in this country equal to those of the white boy.

The counting-rooms of New England are as yet closed to them, and it is only when they have made almost superhuman efforts that they have ever been able to accomplish the same results that have been easily produced by their more favored white neighbors.

This should not be looked upon as a matter for our discouragement, but rather as an existing fact within the comprehension of every ambitious colored boy in America, and one which he must face, and which should stimulate him to renewed energy and determination to succeed.

Mr. Morris had friends among the whites that were stronger and better than any that have come to the side of any other colored man in this State. Brought up as he was, where Garrison, May, Seyall, Phillips, Parker, Pillsbury, Foster, and all the great agitators for the rights of the negro, held their meetings and laid their plans for the removal of wrong and injustice, one would be likely to find powerful friends to defend him to the best of their ability. But it was beyond their power to place him anywhere near the enjoyment of opportunities like those that were common to the average white boy.

Look at him, ye young colored men of America, battling for the elevation of his race! Solitary and alone, steadily moving on and on up the rough and rugged steep; enveloped in clouds as thick and dense as blackest night. No sign of promise to cheer his way save the vivid lightnings and heavy thunderings of a long and fratricidal war, always uttering his soul-stirring cry, "Let my people go!"

See him trying to hire an office like other men; listen to the landlord telling him that he cannot let to a colored man.

View him again, surmounting obstacles and acquiring money enough to purchase a home in a little town outside of Boston, in a neighborhood that would compare with his means and profession ; see him even then pursued and hunted out simply because he was of African descent. Look at him farther on, possessing the confidence and respect of the people of that town, nominated by them for their mayor. Look again, and see the same people petitioning the Governor of this Commonwealth to appoint him as judge of their court. Watch him as deprived of that appointment by cruel, studied neglect, fighting on with increased determination until he is recognized in the front rank of his profession, and in possession of a splendid residence in one of the most aristocratic parts of Boston.

What legacy more grand could have been left by any man to his people than the one that has descended to us from Robert Morris ? His success must give to the young of our race new courage and determination to assert their manhood in the struggle for place and fame.

Dear friend, we have not spoken of you in studied phrase, but in the time allotted to us we have sought to tell as much as we could of the story of your life. We parted with you at the chapel in yonder church-yard ; then o'erwhelmed with grief, our lips refused to utter the word adieu ; but now in this place consecrated to God, are assembled many of us who were glad to hail you as our chief. Here again we must part.

Rest, thou noble soul ! and until we meet in that home of peace to which you have gone, we say good-by ! good-by !

At the completion of Mr. Walker's eloquent tribute to the deceased, Mrs. Nellie Brown Mitchell sang very sweetly, "Angels ever Bright and Fair." This musical selection was followed by the reading of the following poem :—

ROBERT MORRIS.

A commemorative Poem, written by ELIJAH W. SMITH, and read by Lieut. JAMES M. TROTTER, at the Memorial Meeting held in Boston, at the Charles Street Church, March 5, 1883.

He sleeps! the faithful sentinel
 On freedom's outer wall;
 No more we hear his warning voice,
 No more his bugle-call;
 But not until the baffled foe
 In dire dismay had fled,
 Aye, not until the starry flag
 Waved *spotless* o'er his head.

His boyhood saw grim Prejudice
 Its giant shadow cast
 O'er each ennobling dream of youth,
 And every prospect blast.
 His early manhood felt the chill
 Of base Proscription's hand;
 No refuge for his hunted race
 In freedom's favored land.

For him no bow of promise shone
 Before his eager eyes;
 No star of hope lit up the gloom
 Of his o'erclouded skies;
 His strife was for equality;
 No honor sought, or fame;
 He climbed the adamantine heights
 And chiselled there his name!

And on the summit, all serene;
 What glories met his view!
 Oppression's cloud had rolled away,
 And all the world seemed new.
 The glorious sun ne'er shone so bright,
 The birds ne'er sang so sweet,
 Proscription, with a mortal wound,
 Lay writhing at his feet!

And oh, how few have seen the bud
 Of youthful hope unfold
 Into the perfect flower of joy,
 With leaves of burnished gold!
 How few have heard the chorus grand
 Whose first notes caught their ear
 Amid the clanking of the chain,
 The sigh, the groan, the tear!

We honor him because he stood
 Calm 'mid the raging sea;
 True to his God, his race, himself,
 His country, liberty!
 And from the polished shield he bore,
 The shafts of malice fell,
 As billows from the good ship's prow
 That breasts the ocean's swell.

He serves his race who bears its mark
 With honor to the end;
 And stands equipped in armor bright,
 Its manhood to defend;
 And he but plays the craven's part
 Who looketh idly on,
 While freedom's fight, by other blades,
 In other hands, is won.

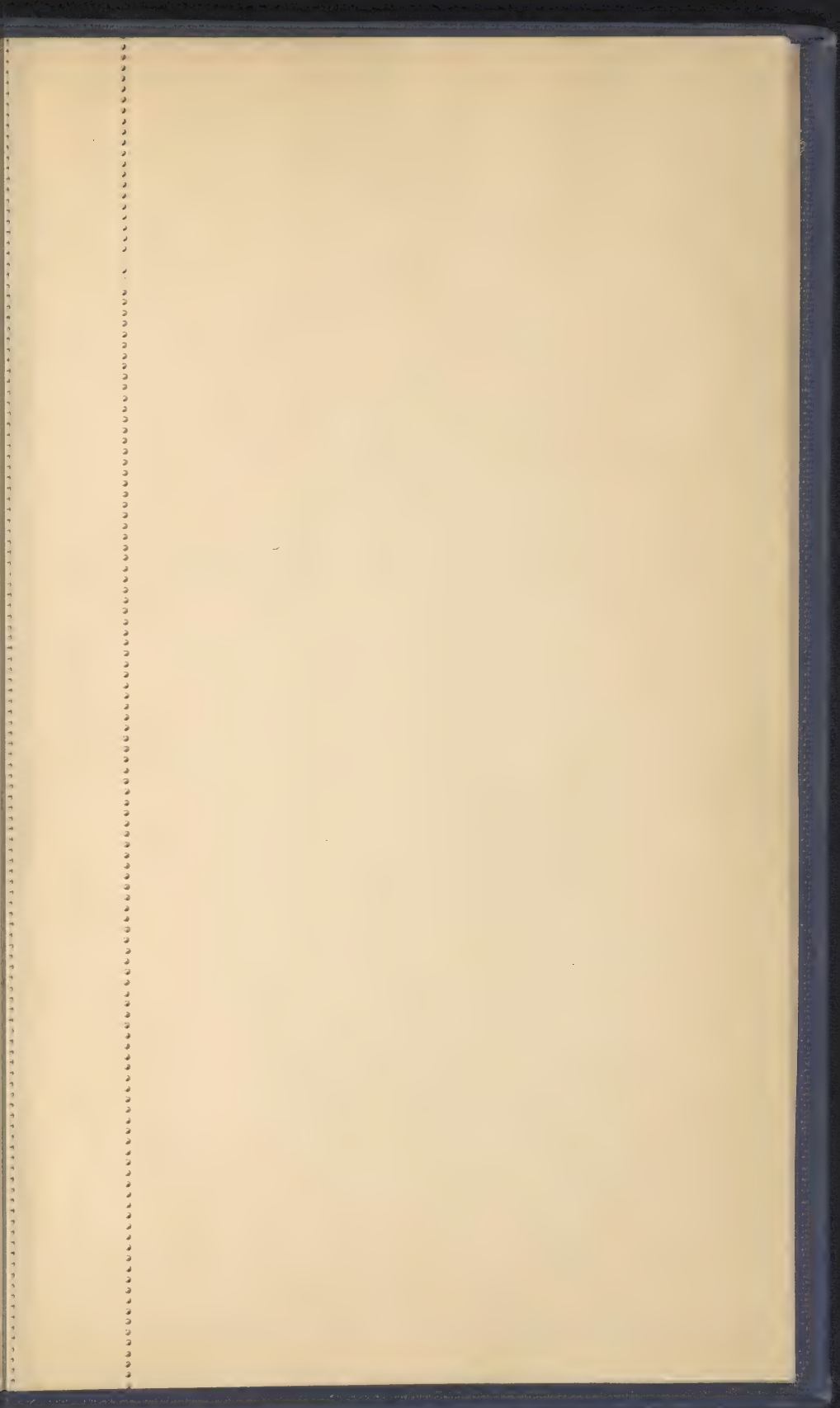
Rest thou in peace! thy work is done;
 How well, our lips can tell;
 Not with a sorrow without hope
 We hear thy passing bell:
 For with the names of those whose lives
 Shed lustre on our race,
 Unblemished by dishonor's stain,
 Shall MORRIS take its place.

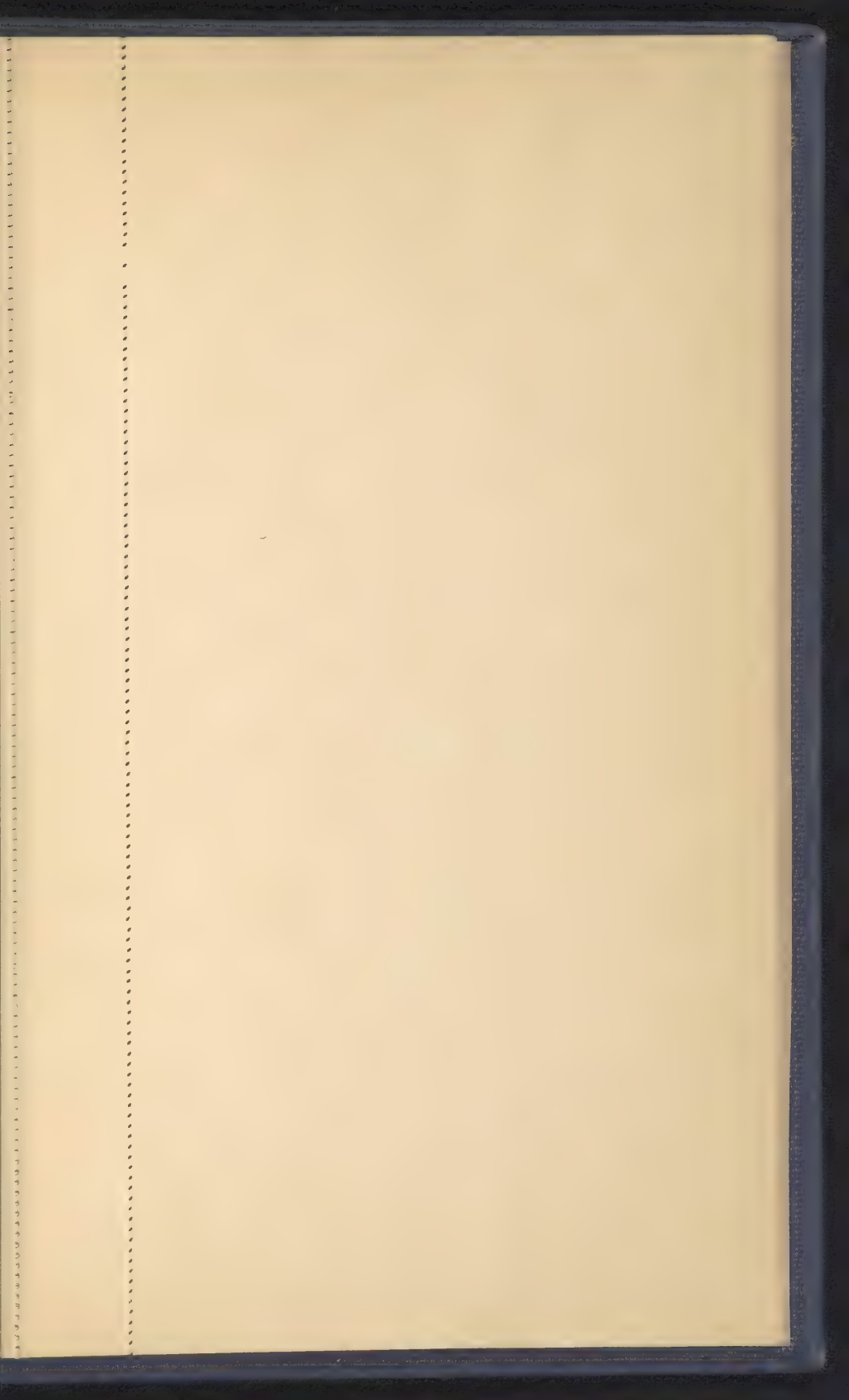
Rest! for the struggling sun that rose
 'Mid slavery's gloomy haze,
 In glory sets; with roseate hues
 The firmament's ablaze;

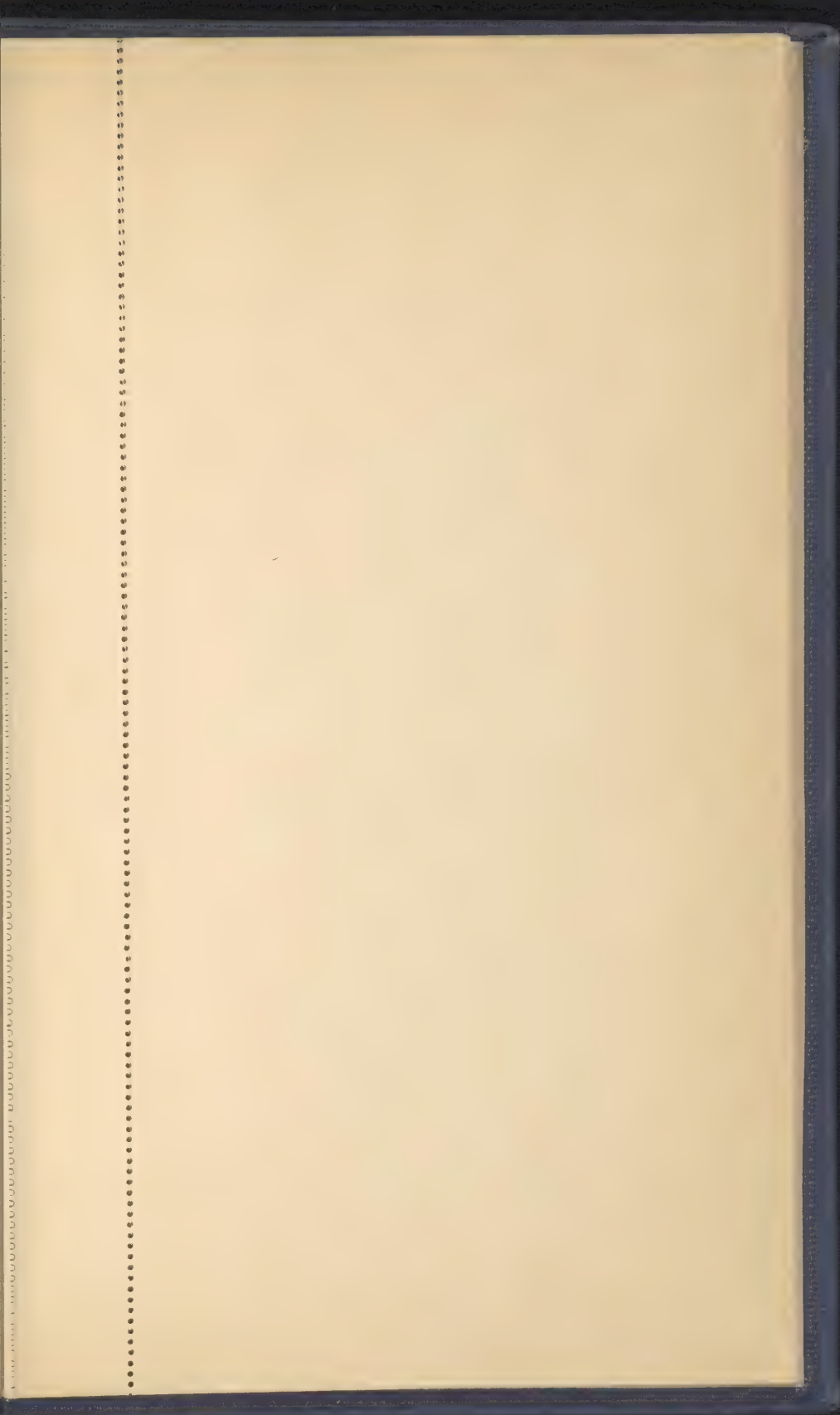
Rest! for thy beacon light shall shine
 Forth, as one lighthouse more
 To warn us of the sunken reefs
 That guard fair Freedom's shore.

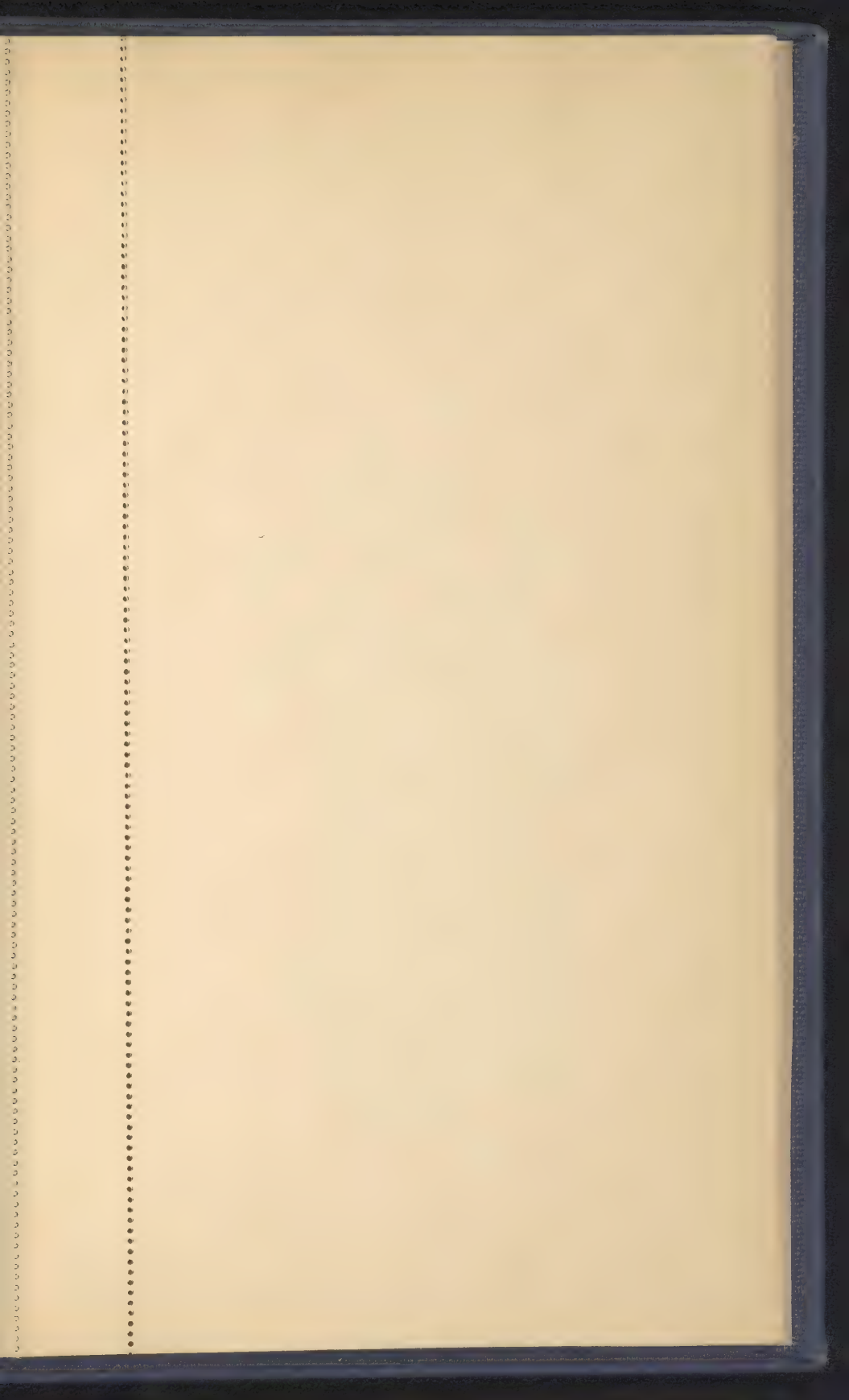
And all along our beaten path
 These bright examples stand:
 There Attucks fell; here Morris strove,
 And Douglass waves his brand:
 The martyr, patriot and sage,
 The living and the dead,
 Still lead our upward march, and bear
 Their banners o'er our head.

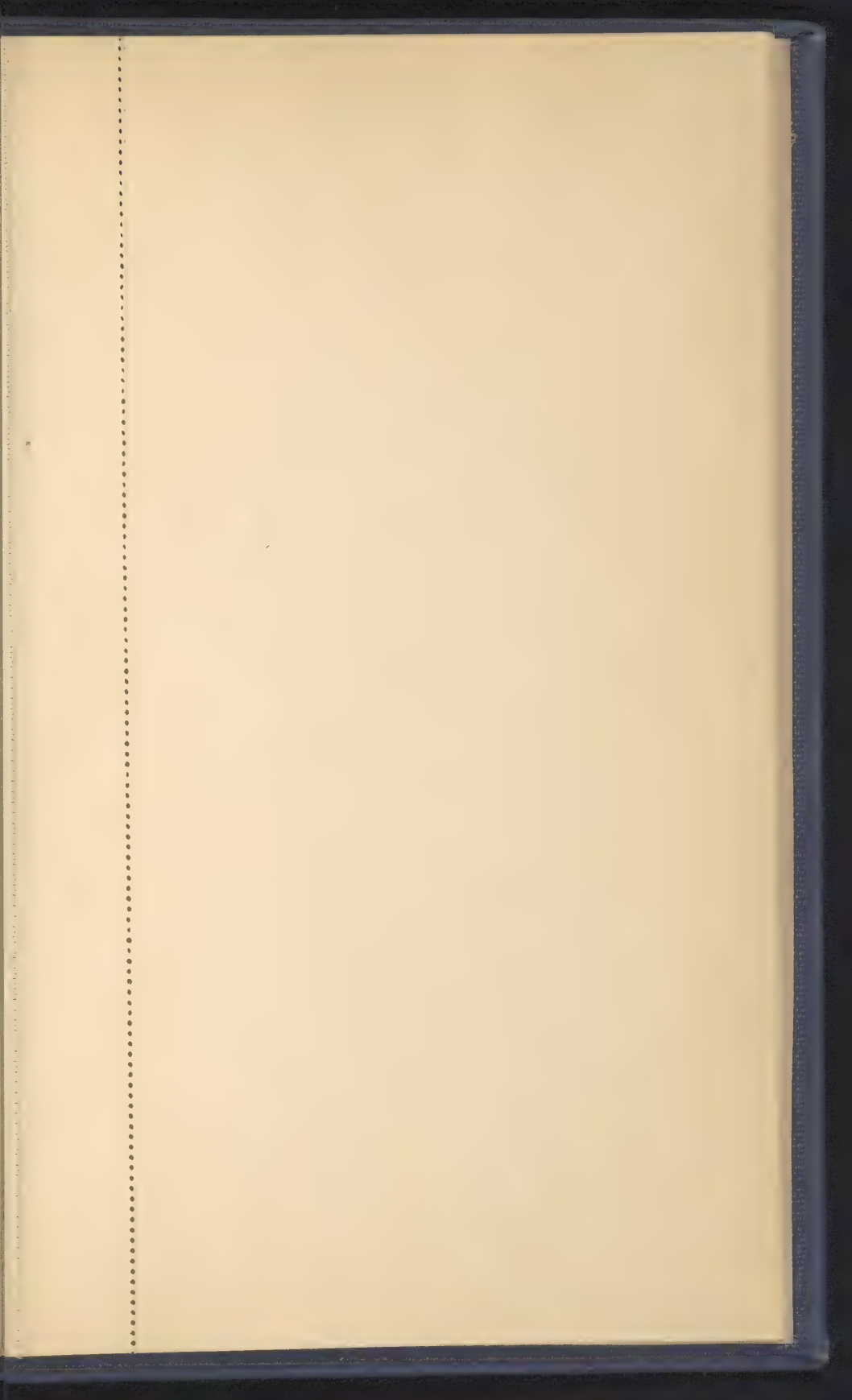
The exercises concluded with the rendition of the vocal
 gem, "Trusting," by the Walker Quintette of Boston.

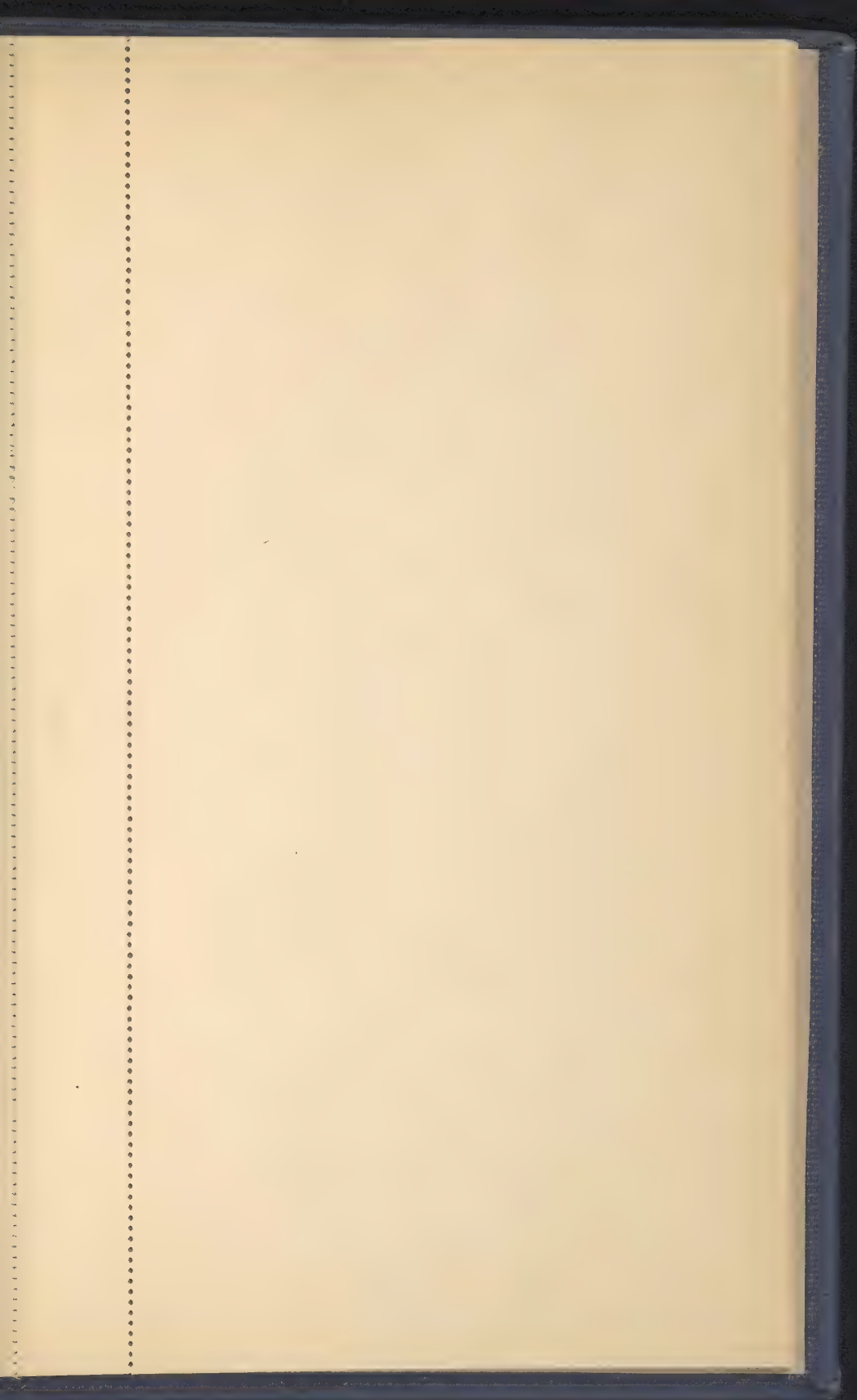


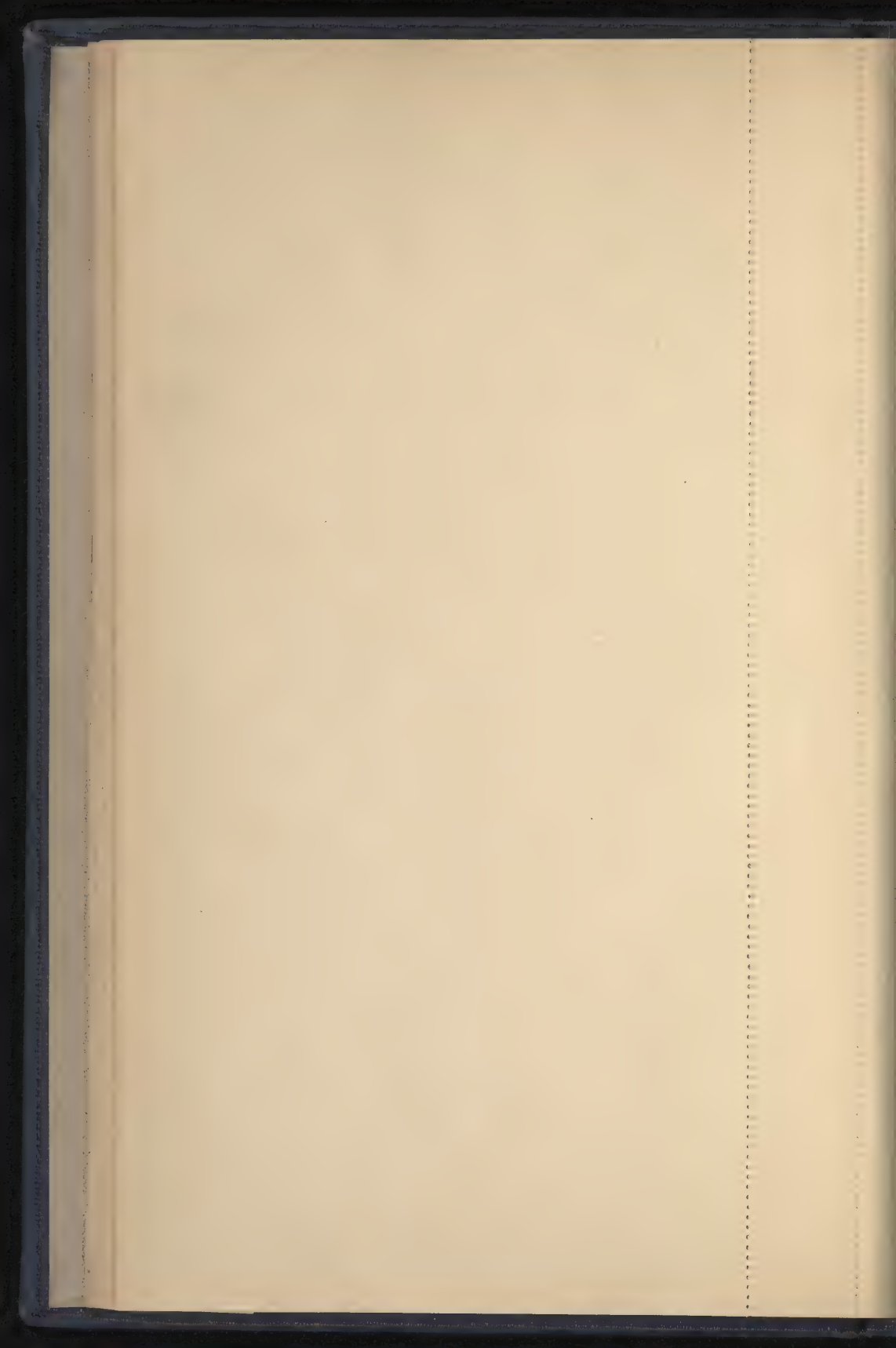


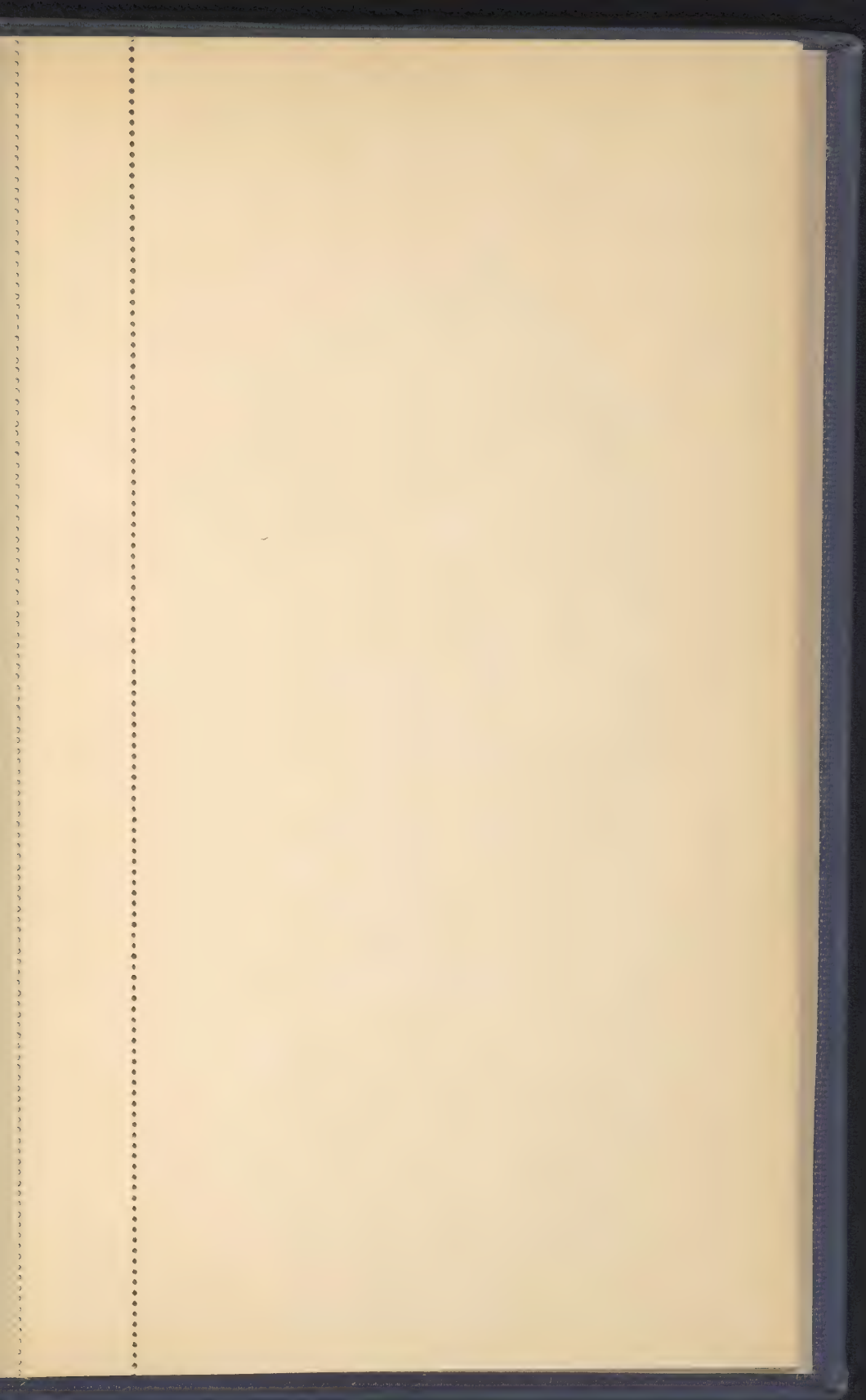


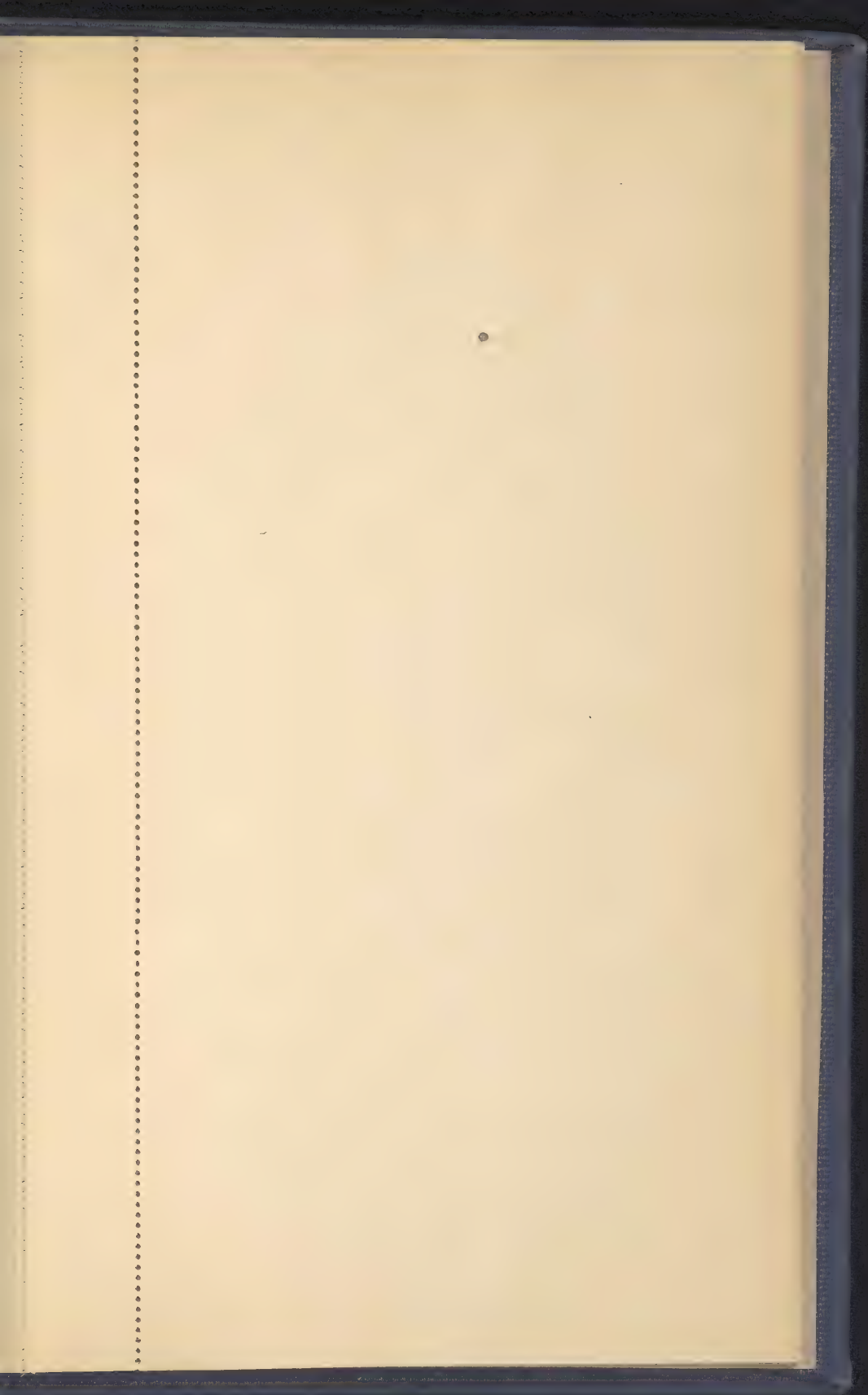


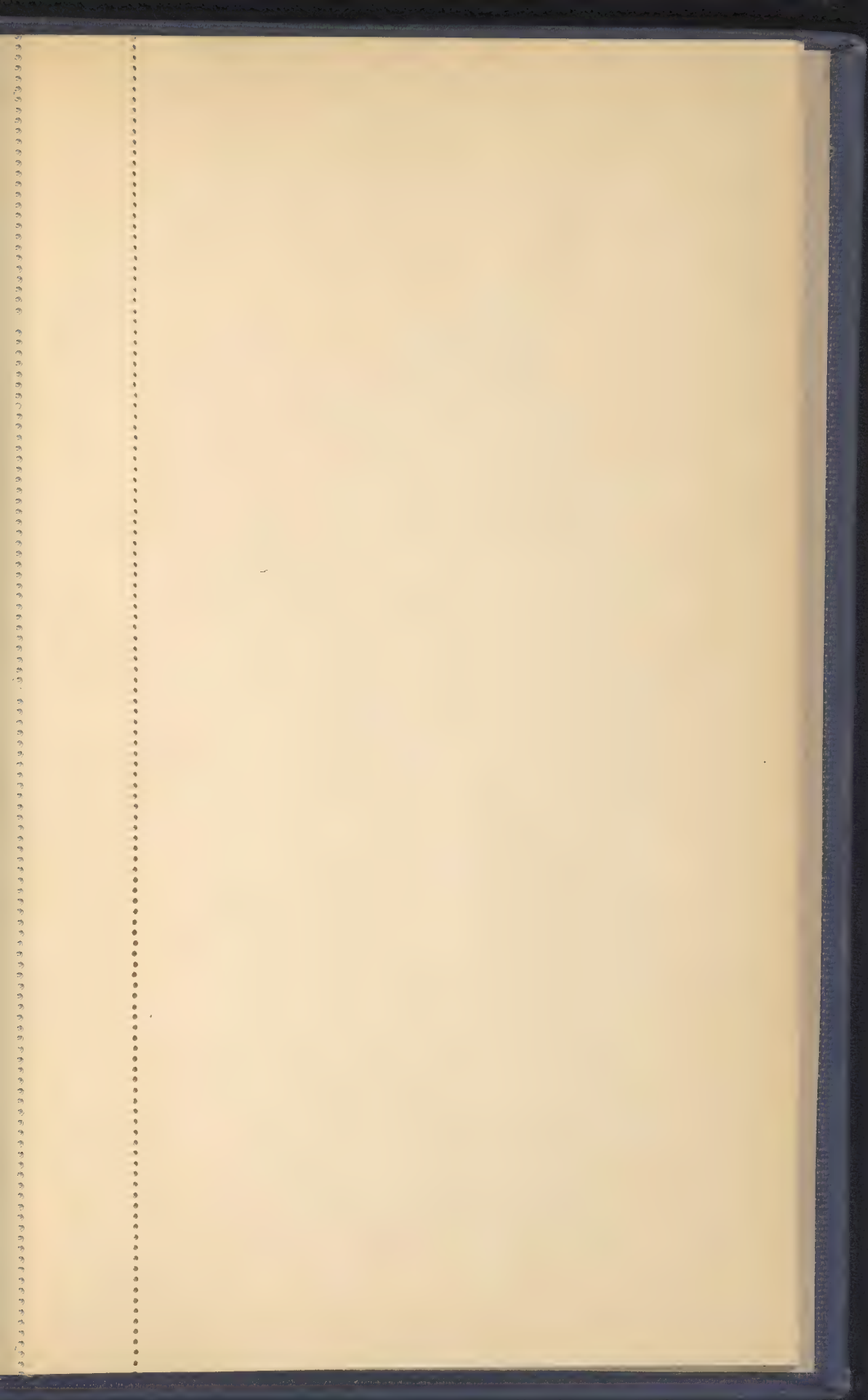


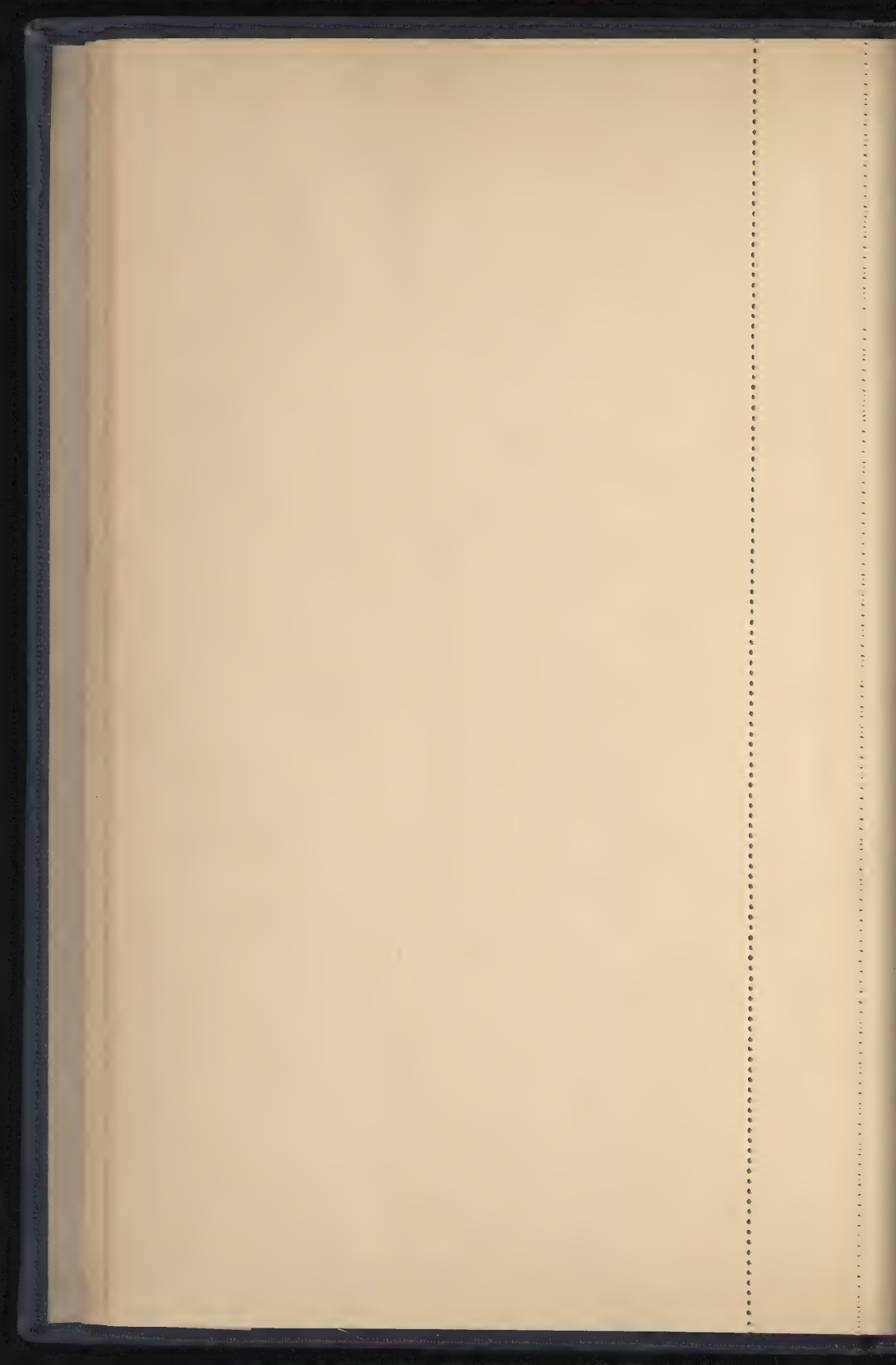


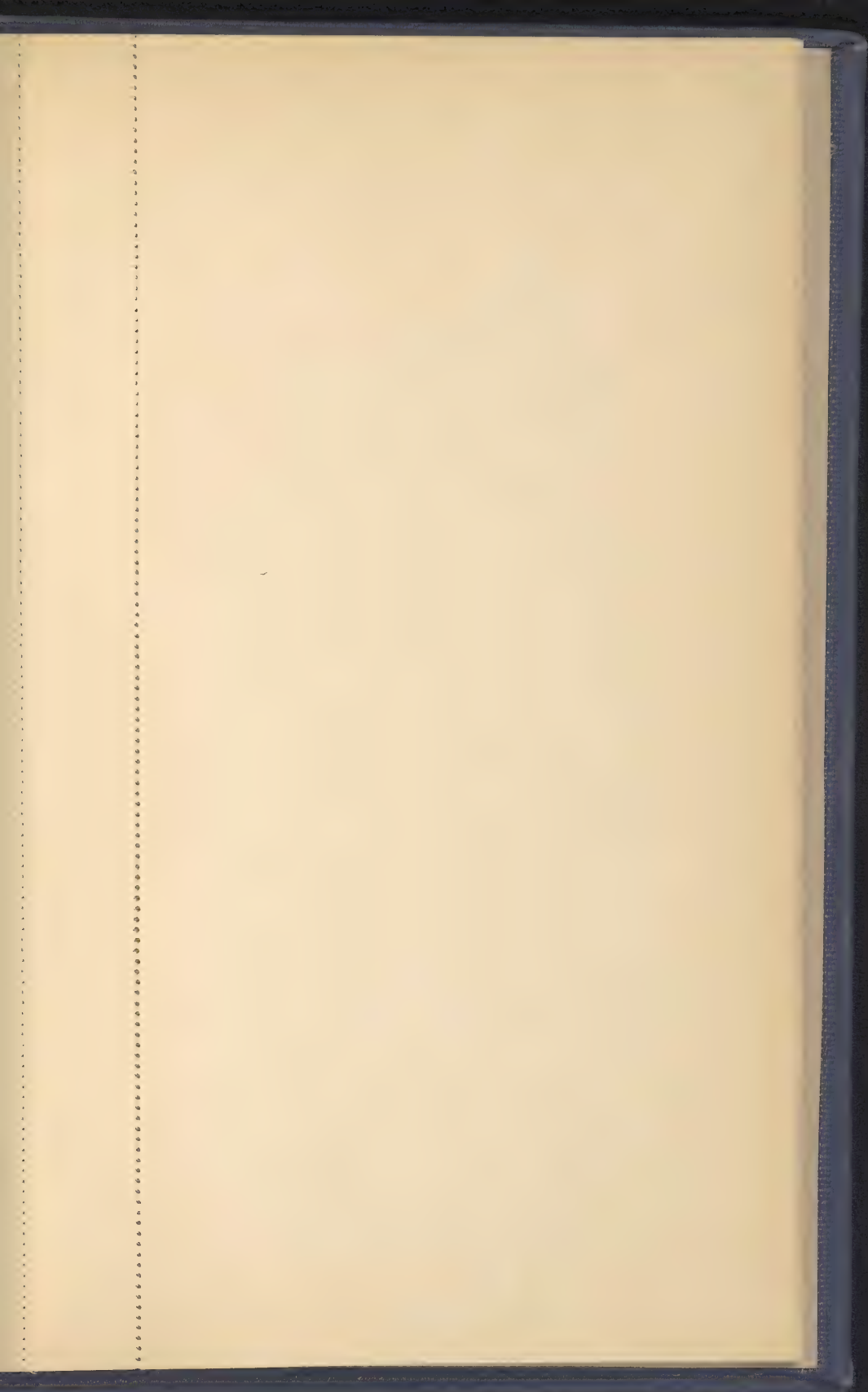


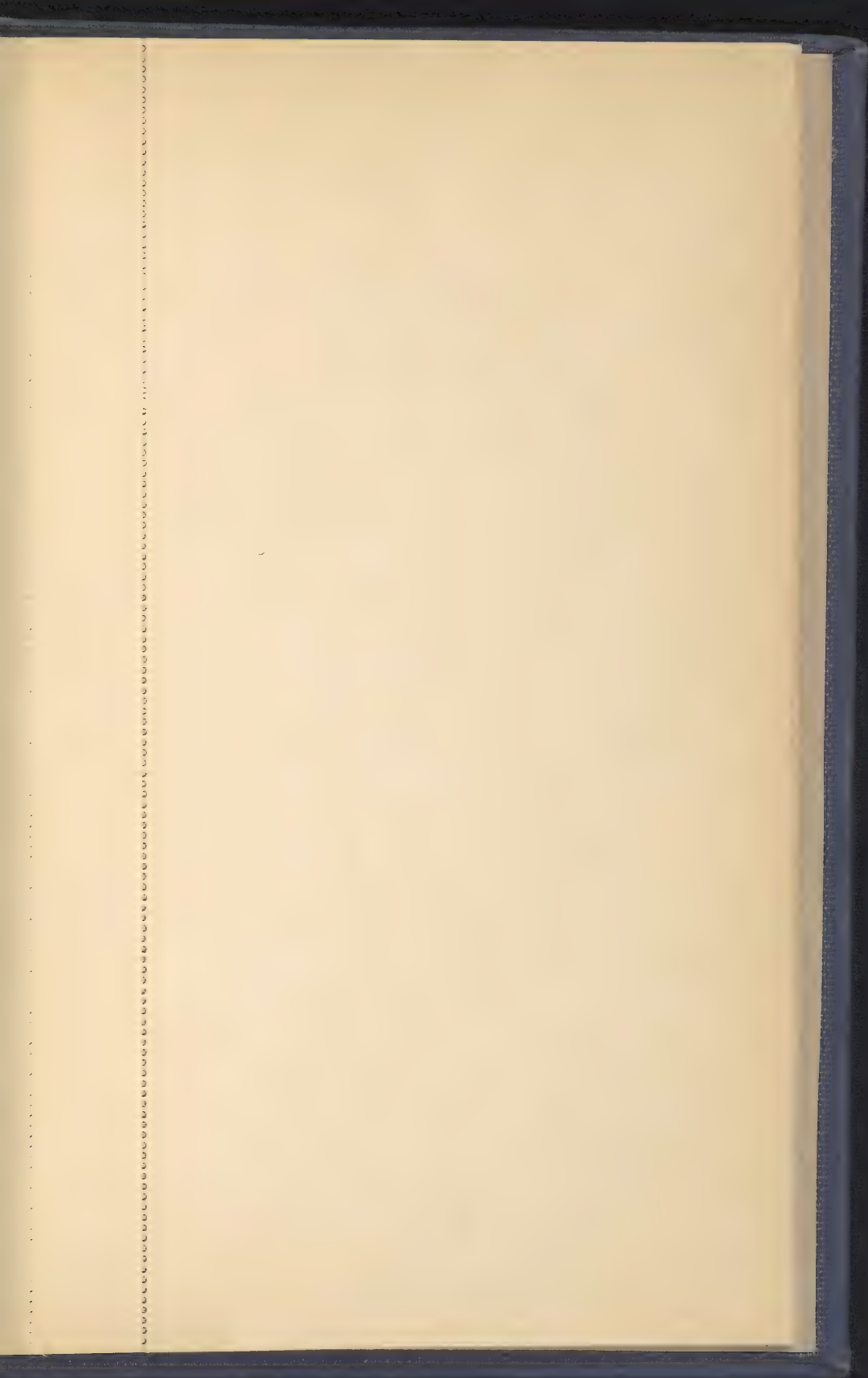


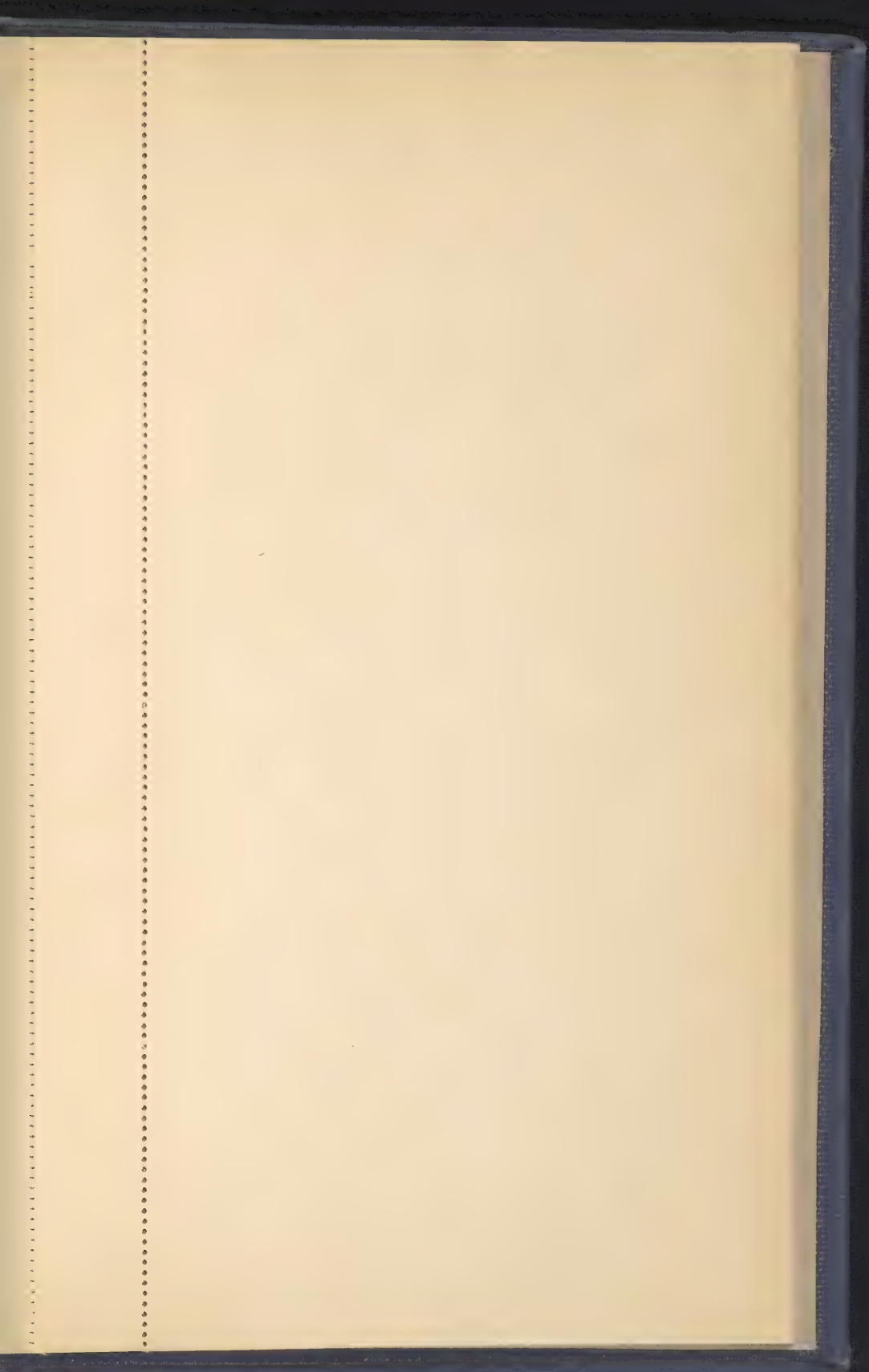


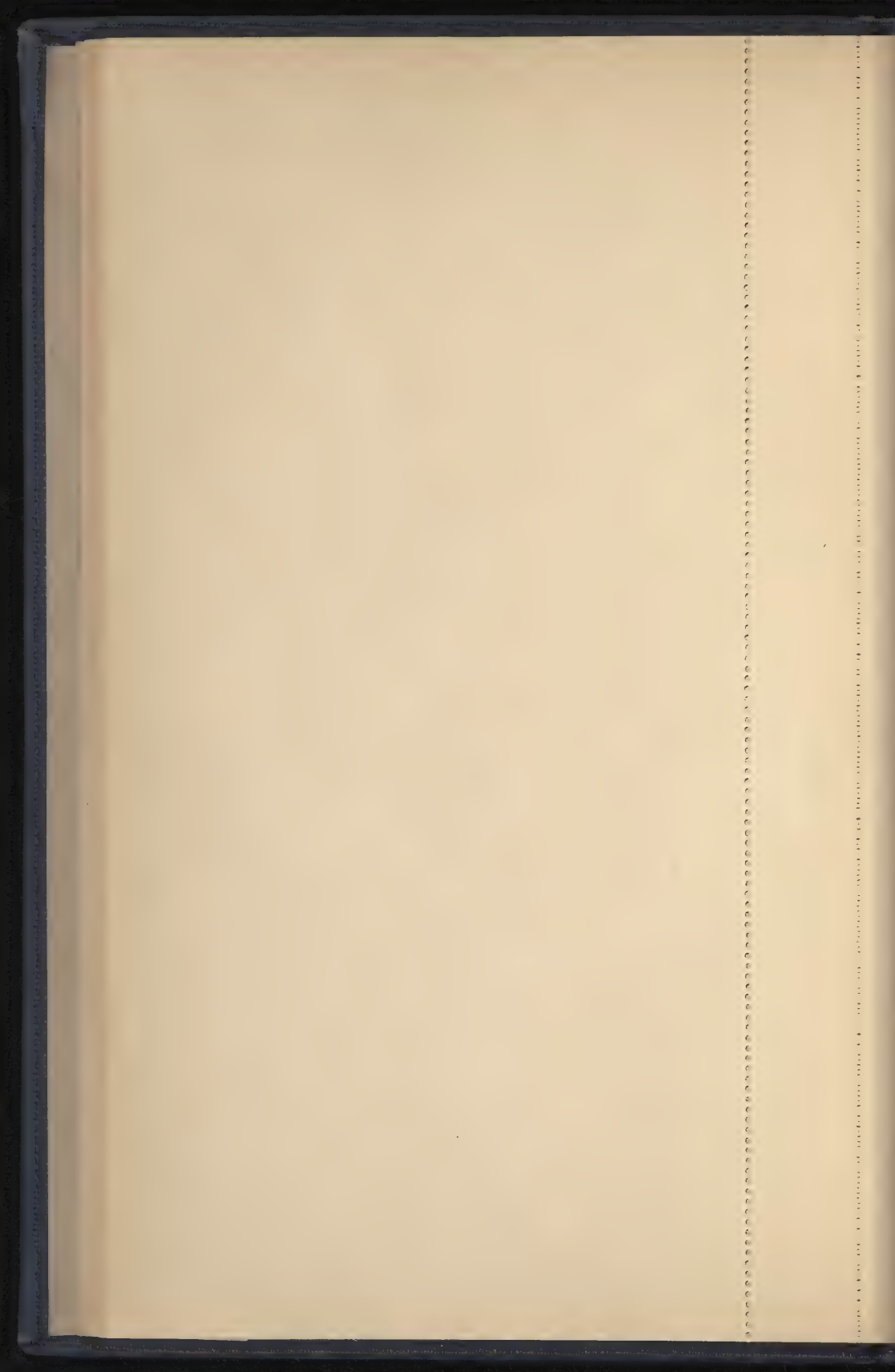


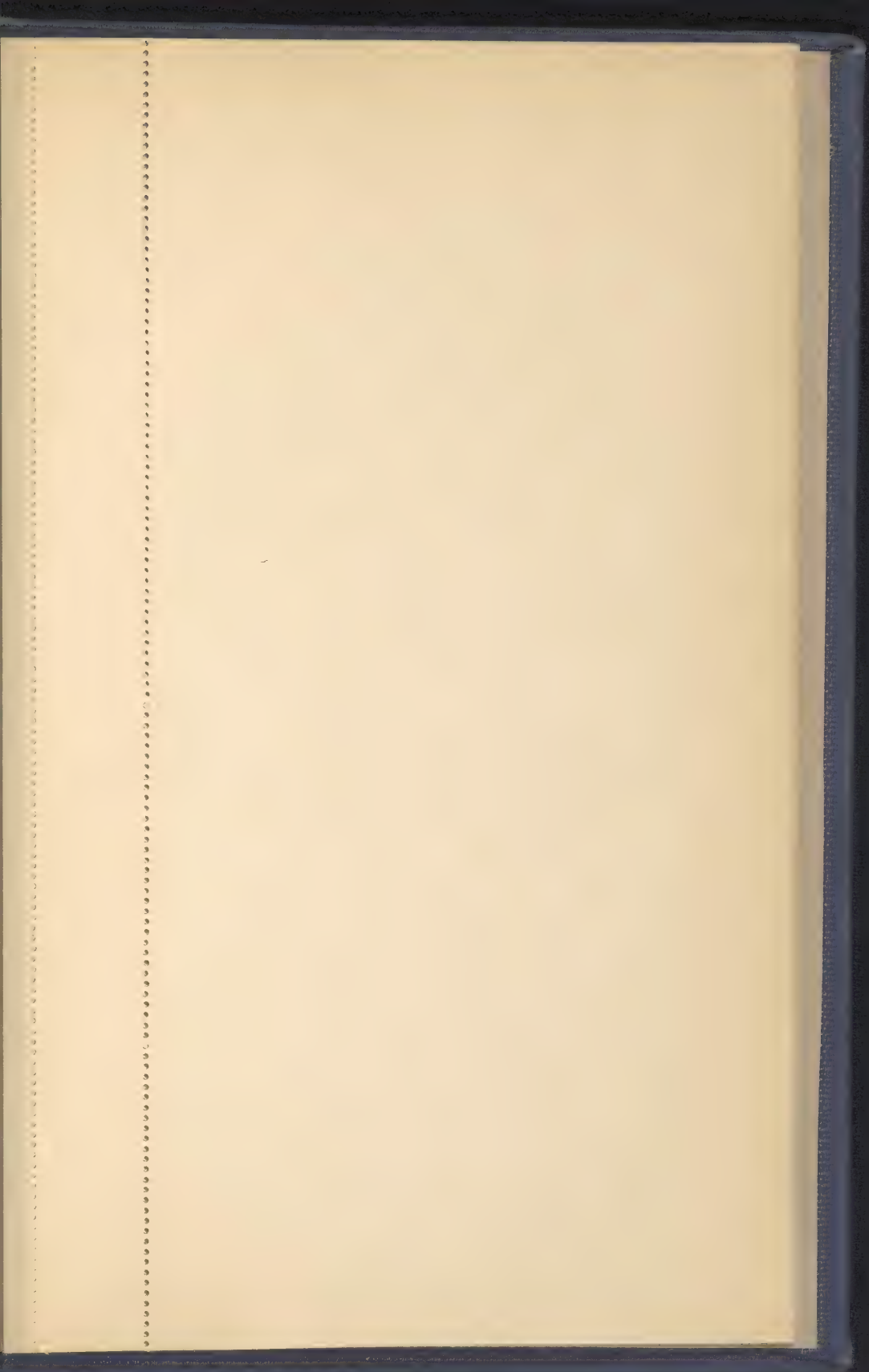


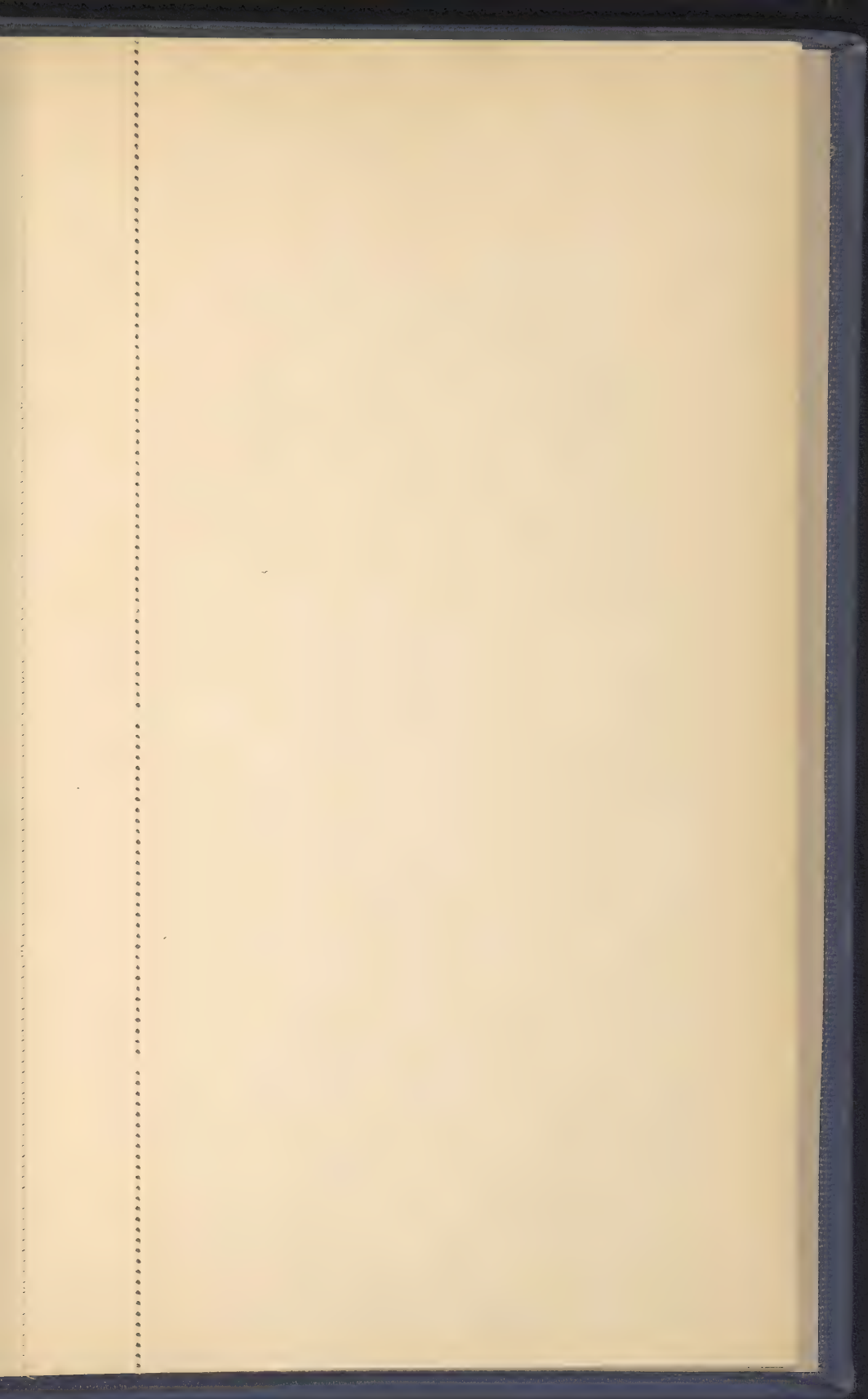


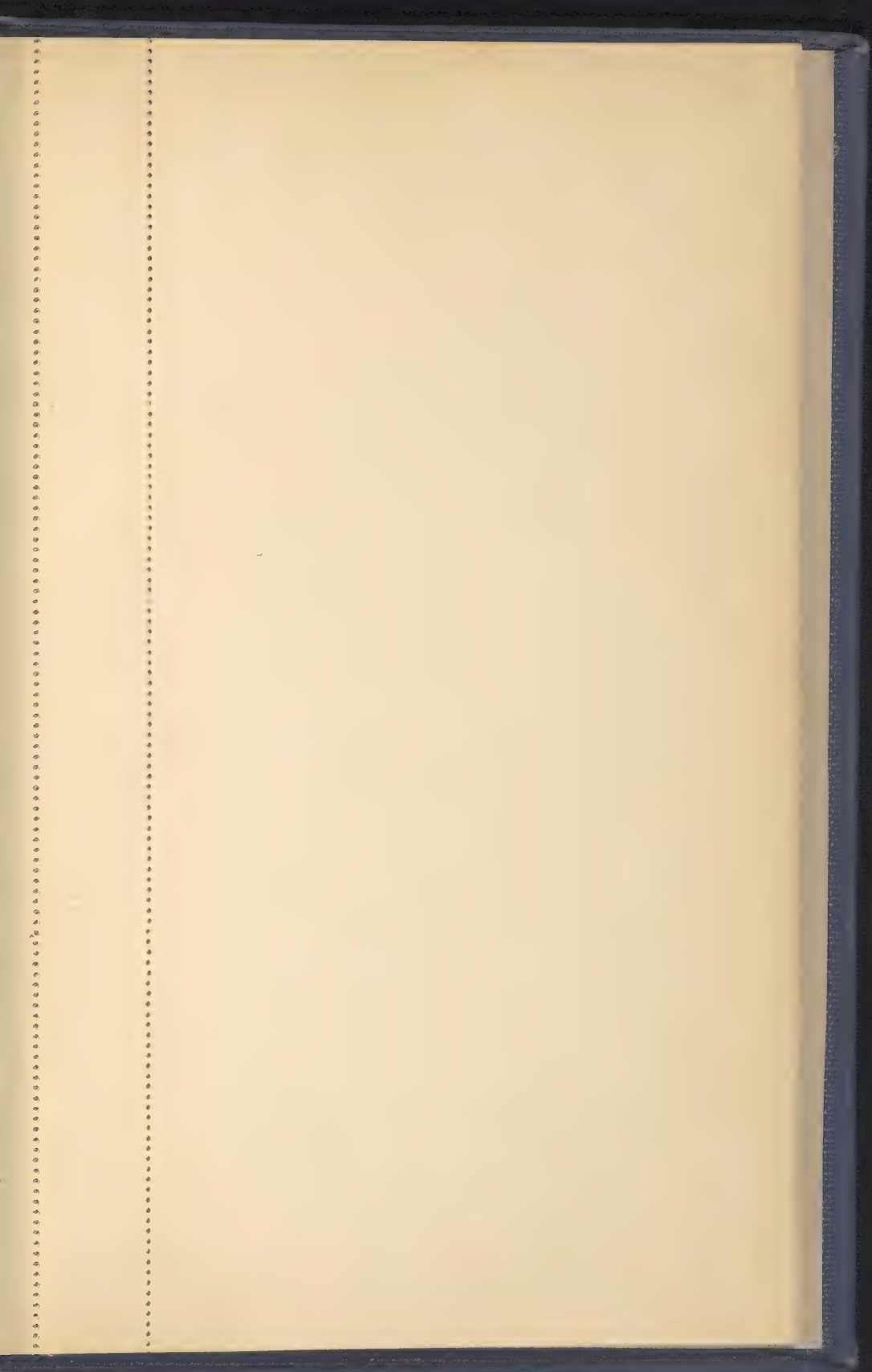


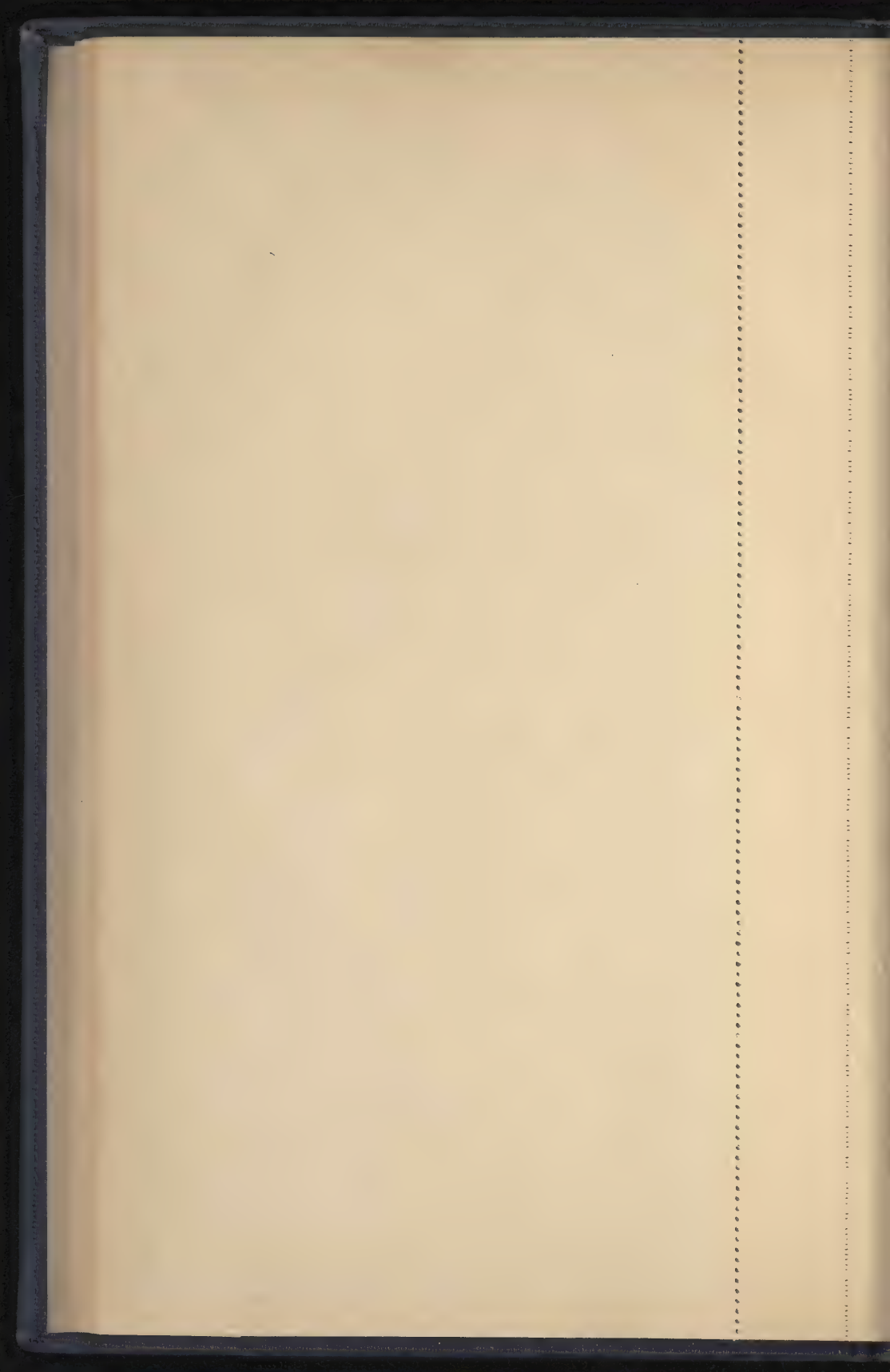


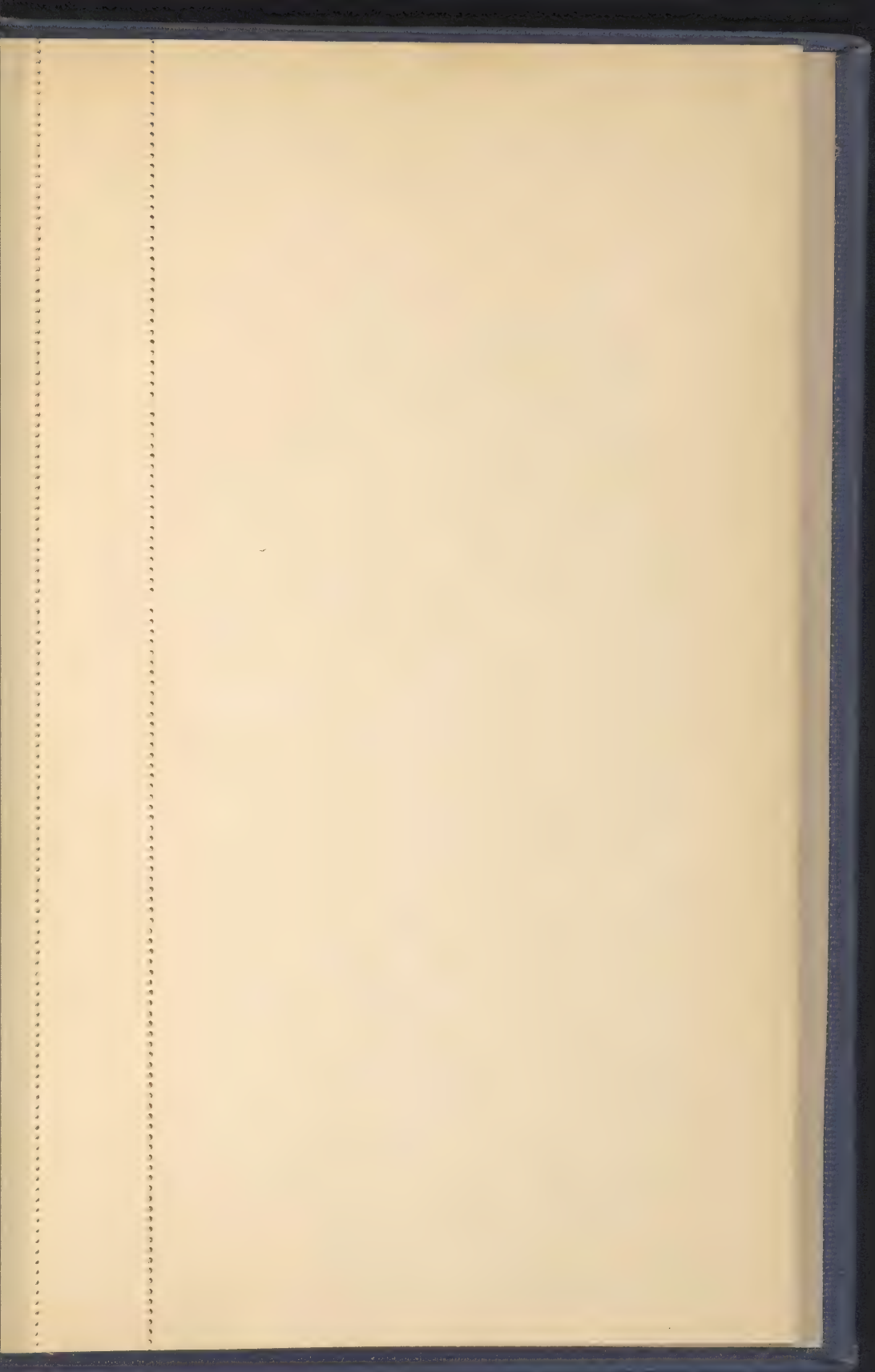


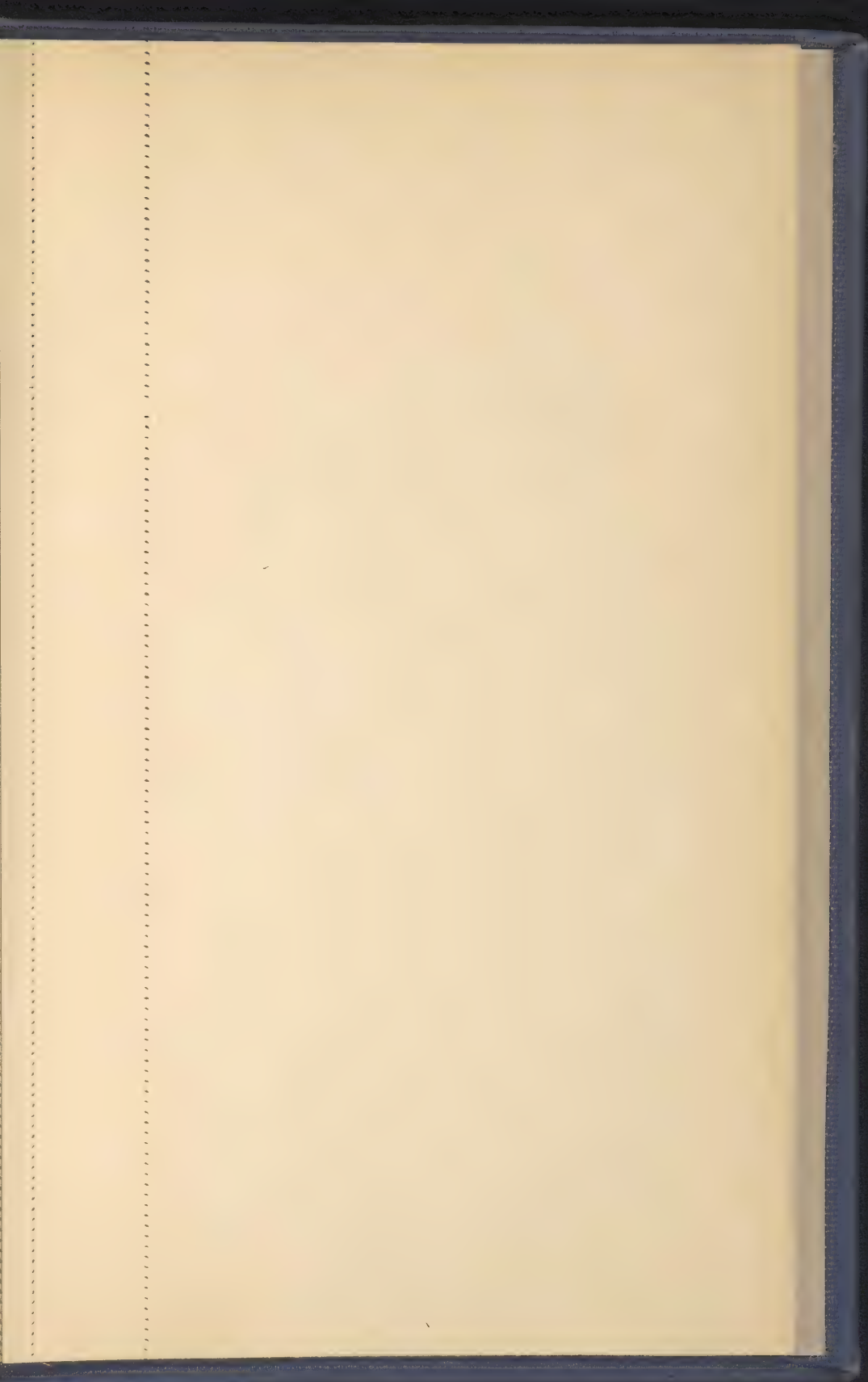


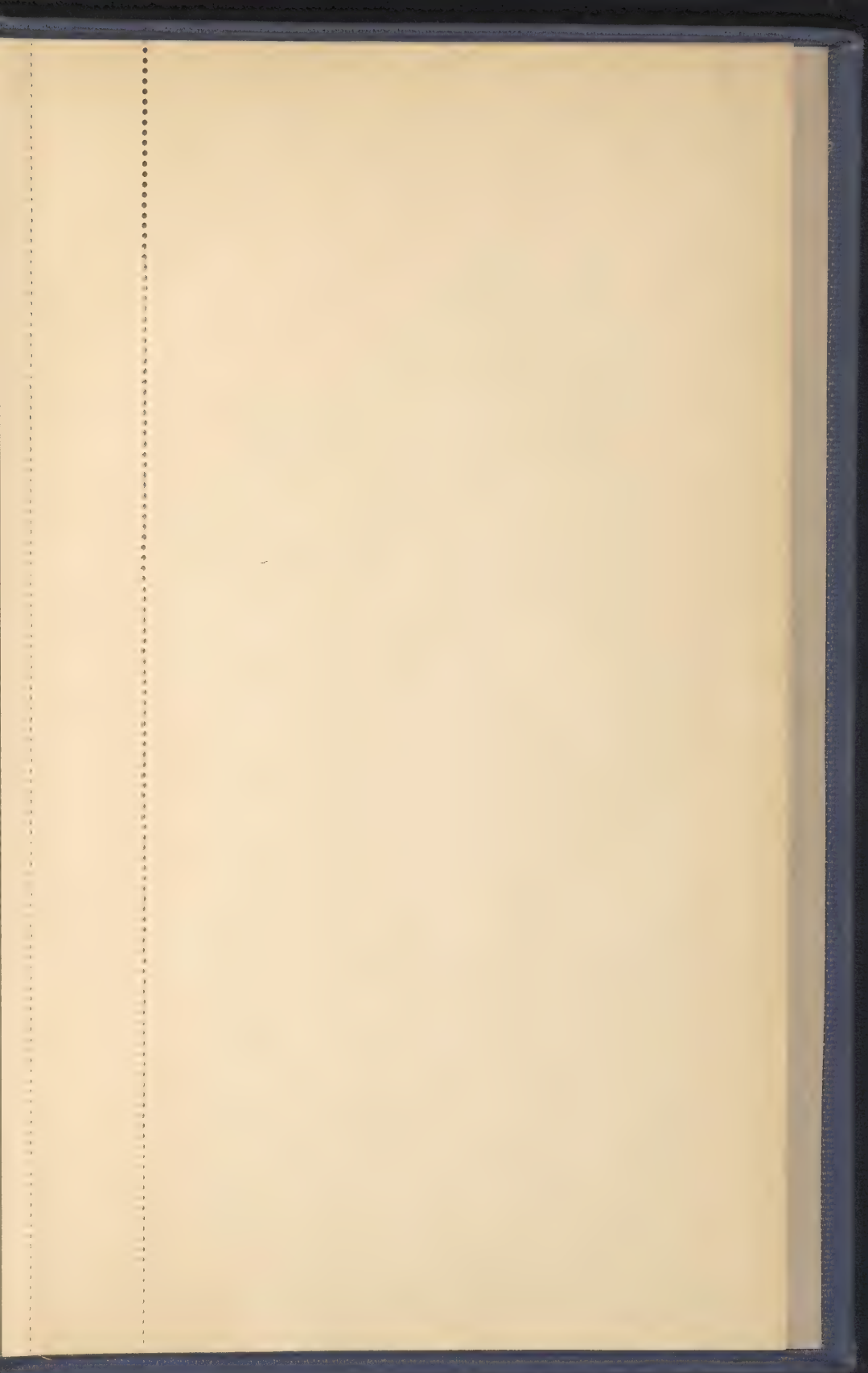


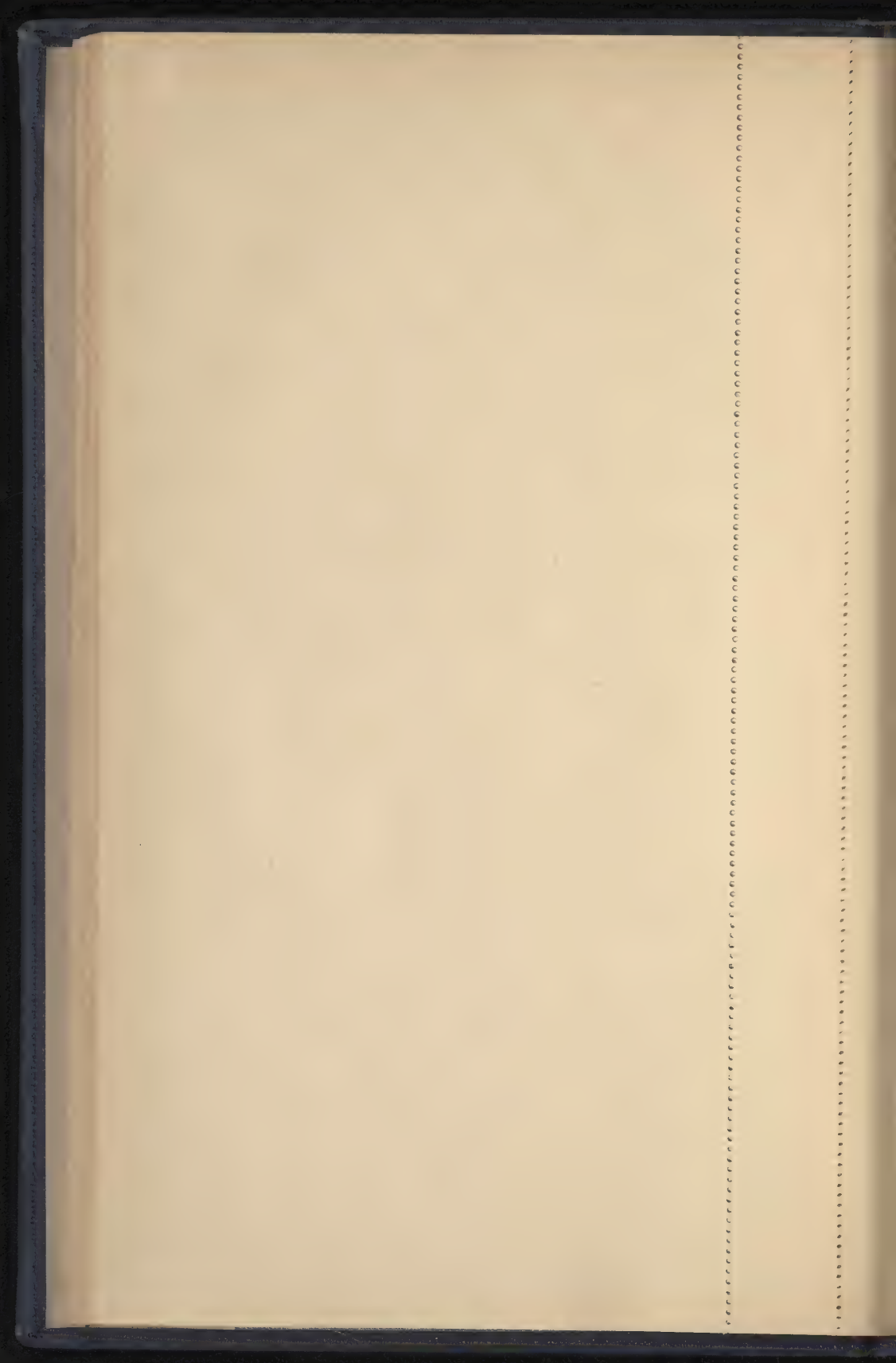


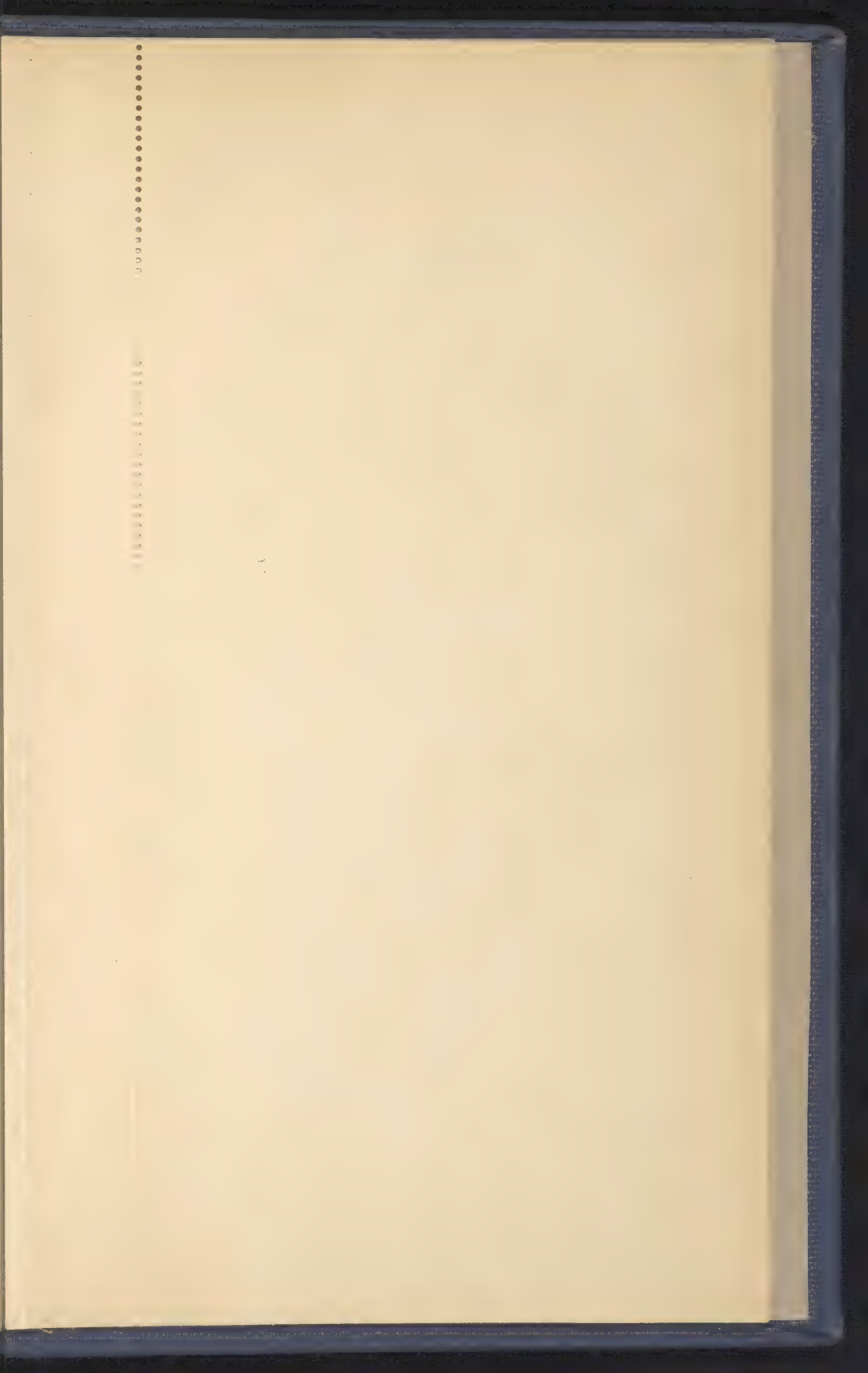




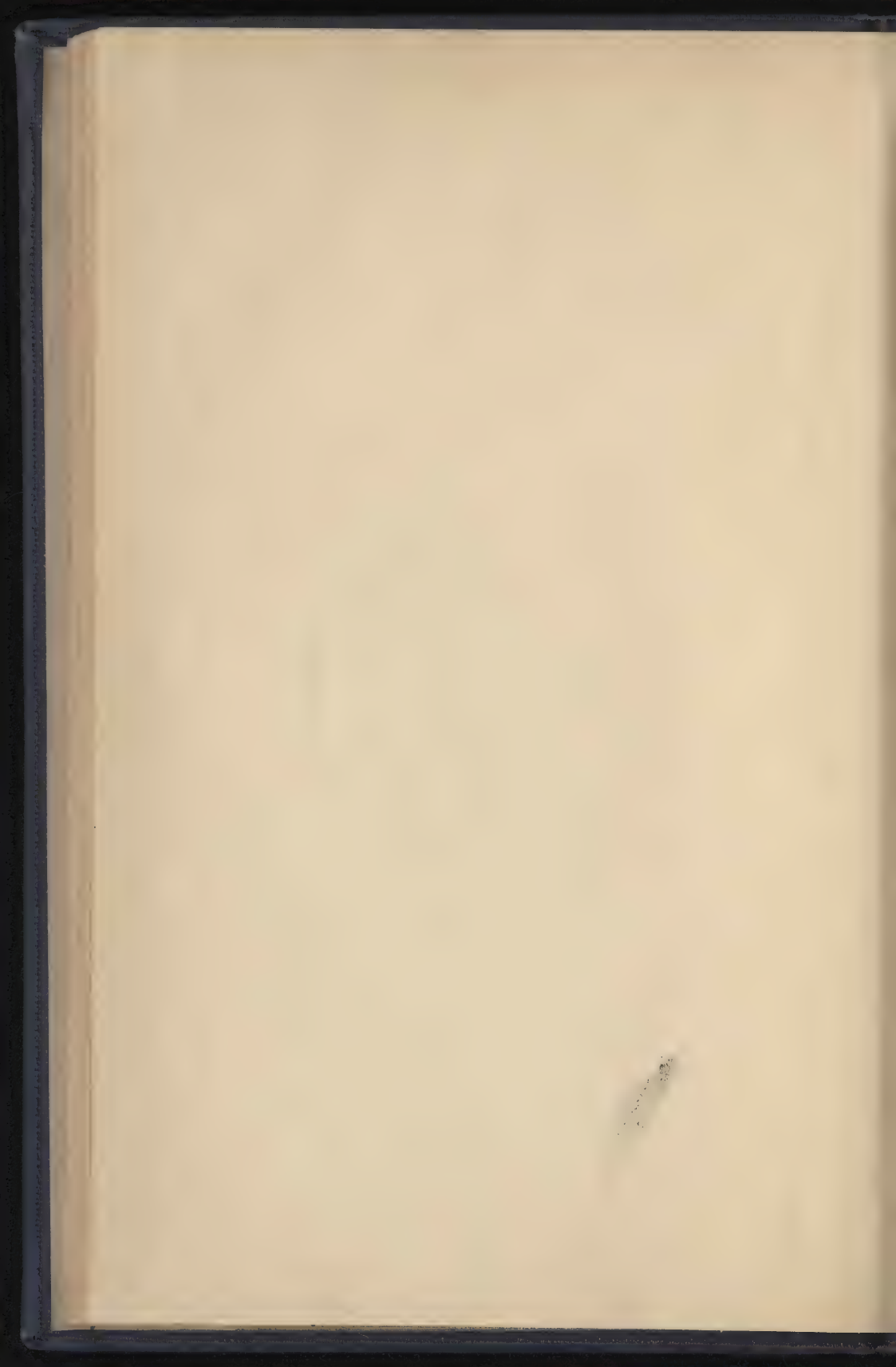


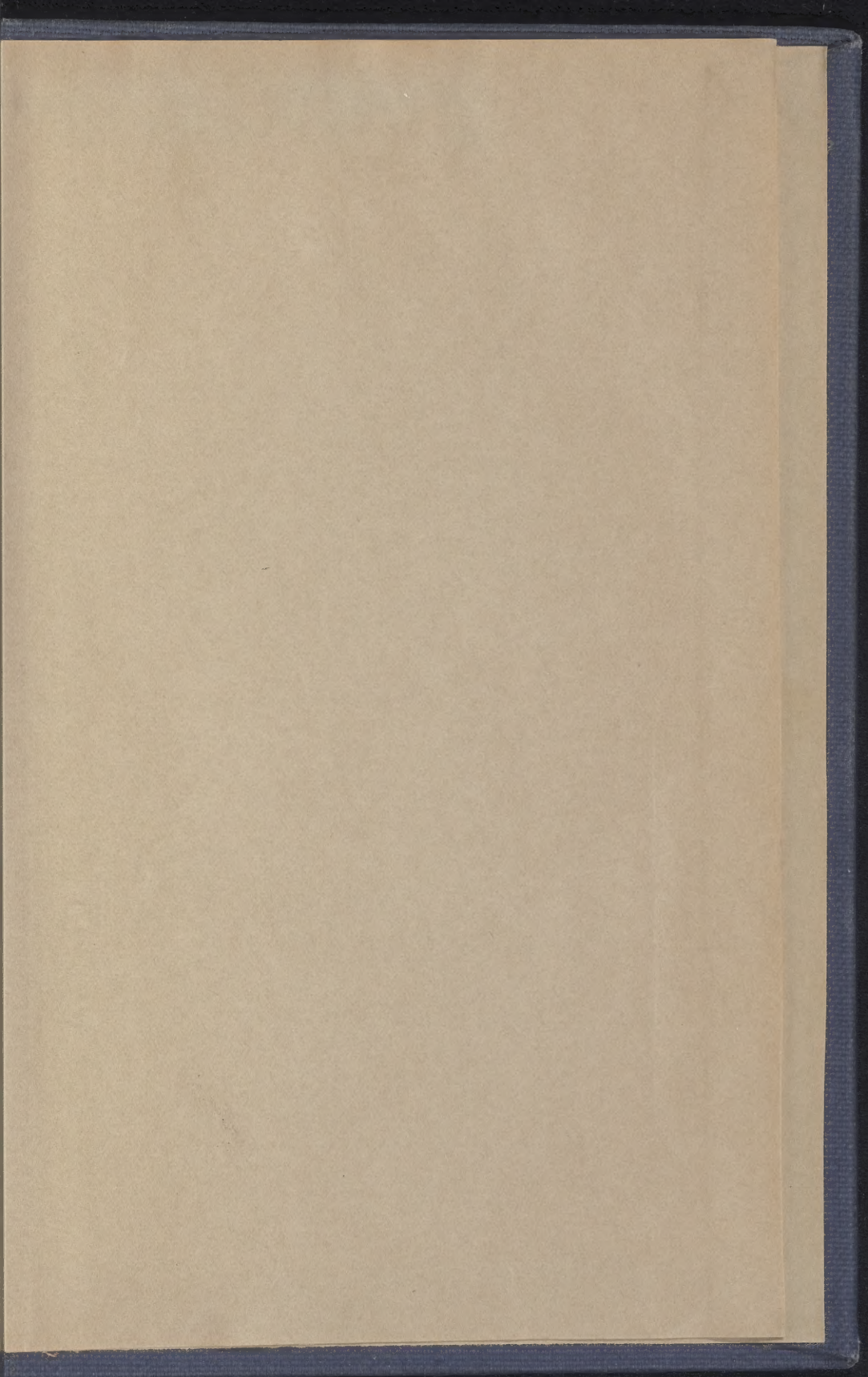


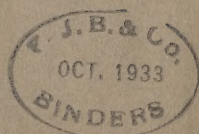











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